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EDITORIAL

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ORTHODOX CHURCHES AND WESTERN LITURGIES

John Madey

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Editorial

In the post Vatican II period there has been a proliferation of intellectually impressive ecumenical literature. It is a striking sign of what may be broadly designated an 'ecumenical interest'. Ecumenical theology is not simply a theological branch along with other branches. It is rather a fundamental dimension of theology. All theologies should have an ecumenical openness. This theology should take the divisions in the Church as a challenge to overcome. For that one should have a serious awareness of ecumenical theology as a theology of the sources and origins of christianity. It is only by getting closer to the roots of christianity that we overcome the divisions in the Church. This theology is concerned with Scripture, writings of the Fathers and liturgies. Above all ecumenical theology is a theology of dialogue.

The Catholic Principles on dialogue are set forth in the Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council. The 1993 Directory (for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism) was concerned about ecumenical formation in seminaries and theological faculties. Then in 1995 the PCPCU (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity) had the task of drawing up practical directives for implementing this concern (Dimension in the Formation of Those Engaged in Pastoral Work). The Council has put forward the suggestion that an ecumenical dimension should permeate every subject taught. What we need is a new ecumenical methodology. It should be a methodology which integrates all the fundamental values which christianity keeps from its beginning.

In the recent past there is an awakening among the ecumenical leaders regarding the necessity of 'spiritual ecumenism'. Among the numerous features of ecumenism and ecumenical movement, the spiritual outlook of it is one of the most vibrant aspects. Vatican II made a significant comment in the background of approving prayer for unity. "This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name spiritual ecumenism" (UR 8). From the dawn of the new ecumenical movement in Edinburgh (1910), common prayer and worship have been a characteristic of all significant meetings. But the catholic opinion is that eucharistic sharing is not to be done indiscriminately. The institution of the ecumenical community at Taize by Roger Schutz and Max Thurian in 1940, and numerous international Bible and Prayer groups all emphasize the prominence of spirituality in the ecumenical outlook.

At present there has been an increasing perception and understanding of the want for both an ecumenical spirituality and for spirituality in ecumenism. Both complement and corroborate each other. Ecumenism that is merely at the level of conversation, consultation or common activity fails on several counts. It does not incorporate adequately the reality of unity; it does not decorate the participants with gifts to be shared reciprocally. It does not allow for both the expression and experience of already existing unity in the Spirit.

The Christian Orient through its ecumenical section always encourages ecumenical theology and ecumenical methodology. To do theology basing on the sources of christian faith is the basic concern of the Christian Orient. This issue of the Christian Orient brings forth an excellent collection of articles from various theological perspectives. The first article is by Prof Dr G. Chediath on The Catholic-Malankara Orthodox Dialogue. Here the author brings out a history of the same dialogue with theological and pastoral reflections. It is a critical study on the present status of this dialogue. Areas of agreement and disagreement are well sorted out. The second article is by Rev. Dr Xavier Kochuparampil on Ecumenical Dimension of Evangelization. It deals with the theology of mission in an ecclesial perspective. In this study the author combines the theological insights of both the Decree on Ecumenism and the Decree on Missionary Activity of the Second Vatican Council. The author explains that mission is at the very heart of the Church and mission is built into the very being of the Church. Then we have the study of Dr Joseph Pavlovic on The Byzantine Catholic Church in Slovakia. It is about the Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia. Its theological rootedness to the ecclesial and missionary work of St Cyril and Methodius occupies the central theme. Then he discusses at large about the different priorities and goals of the notion of communion among the Greek Catholics and the Greek Orthodox. The last article is by Dr Joseph Perumthottam on The Synod of Diamper and the Subsequent Events Which Led to the Coonan Cross Oath of 1653. It is a sober and critical study on the event bringing out its theological and ecumenical impact.

The Editor

The Catholic-Malankara Orthodox Dialogue

The tenth round of talks between the theologians of the Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Church was held at Spirituality Centre, Kottayam, Kerala from 26th to 30th October, 1998. It is high time to make an evaluation of the activity of the Joint International Theological Commission constituted in 1988 by His Holiness Pope John Paul II and His Holiness Baselios Mar Thoma I, the Catholicos of the Malankara Orthodox Church.

The first round of talks was in 1989 (22-26th Oct.) at the Sophia Centre of the Orthodox Church at Kottayam. Fr. E. R. Hambye (+1990) wrote a report about this meeting in the *Christian Orient*.¹ Among other things Fr. Hambye speaks of a dinner on the 26th at the Archbishop's House, Changanacherry: "The chief guest was Matthews Mar Coorilos, Metropolitan of Quilon and the Catholicos Elect. The host, Mar Joseph Powathil, the Orthodox Chairman of the meeting Paulose Mar Gregorios, and the chief guest spoke with such great ecumenical perception and fervour that one could almost believe that the communion between both the churches was just around the corner....Moreover, when the cake was brought on the table, the chief guest asked his neighbour, Fr. P. Duprey, to cut it together with him. Then, at the

applauses of all the guests, and with a spontaneity that signified so much at the moment, Mar Coorilos put a piece of cake into the mouth of the Vatican delegate. It was as if the marriage between both the churches was almost settled. Let us firmly hope and sincerely pray that it may be so without not too long an awaiting".² But so far, after ten years, "the marriage between both the churches" is not yet settled. The hope of the author and others still remain as an objective, and the prayer for unity continues daily.

The Christological Agreement

During the first meeting itself the Commission could prepare a joint statement on Christology. This common text concerning the faith in the mystery of the Incarnate Word was submitted to the authorities of both the churches and after their approval, it was made public on June 3, 1990.³ Many consider that it was the best Christological inter-church formulation recently agreed upon by churches.

From the Second up to the tenth meeting

After the first meeting, every year, there was a joint meeting, preceded by sub-committee meetings. But so far the

1 10/4 (1989) p. 163-4.

2 *Ibid*, p. 164

3 CO XI/4 (1990), pp. 197-8.

joint commission could not produce any document of substantial quality, which could be presented to the churches for approval. There were three subcommittees: on church history, on theology and on common witness. The church history subcommittee looked into the history of Christianity in Kerala. The subcommittee on theology dealt with different theological issues; and the third one looked into ways and means of common witness.

Persistent Prejudices

In order that the theological dialogue (dialogue of truth) may be effective dialogue of love (charity) must precede; it means that there must be necessary preparations before we start serious theological dialogue.⁴ Dialogue should be based on following ecumenical principles:

(1) Consider the dialoguing churches as equal partners. (2) Avoid outdated and meaningless discussions on unimportant issues. (3) Do not try to convert the partners; do not brood over the past, but look to the future mission and unity; try to understand the Christian mysteries together. (4) Concentrate on those things which promote the unity of the churches and thus do the ecumenical service.⁵

Prejudice still prevails in Kerala in certain circles. For example, some among the Latin section of the Catholic Church still consider that the ancient St. Thomas Christians were "Nestorian heretics and schismatics". They were brought under the obedience by the Goan archbishop Dom Menezes at the Synod of Diamper in 1599. During the recent tenth meeting, one of their representatives was vehemently defending the western missionaries of the sixteenth century and outrightly denouncing the St. Thomas Christians as Nestorian heretics.⁶ The Latin Catholics in Kerala are going to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Synod of Diamper next year (1999) in a very solemn way. It is a blow to the ecumenical understanding among the churches in Kerala. His Holiness John Paul II has prohibited, the usage "Nestorian".⁷ secondly, one should not blame all the western missionaries and the whole of western christianity on the basis of the mistakes committed by some missionaries of the 16th century. Today the imperialist powers have gone. We live in a free world and to continue to denounce the present leadership for the mistakes of the 16th century is unwarranted and improper.

4 *Ecumenical Directory*, 1993, no. 172-182.

5 cfr., *The Vienna Dialogue*, Booklet no. 6 (1995) pp. 88-102.

6 John Ochanthuruth, "The Synod of Diamper and its impacts on Kerala Church" Calicut, 1998.

7 "All the christian churches must humbly acknowledge their grave responsibility for the marginalization and the sufferings endured by the Assyrian Church throughout the centuries: the pejorative epithet "Nestorian" (often synonym of heretical) with which they have referred to this church until recent times, is no longer acceptable and must be definitely abandoned" (*IS 91* (1996/1-2), p. 25).

An Example and a Fear

Even in the Catholic communion, one notices at present in Kerala some indiscipline. Even though there is the supreme authority in the Catholic Church, the liturgical problems in the Syro-Malabar Church risk to cause great scandal to many and might harm the cause of Christ. Secondly, in the Catholic communion, the two ancient oriental, native, apostolic, Catholic churches in India are restricted to a very tiny corner of India and denied *in practice* the basic rights of a church, namely, the pastoral care of their faithful and evangelization. Thirdly, although there is more talk on collegiality, there is still fear regarding the way certain big churches act towards smaller churches. As long as there is no firm assurance that the rights of the oriental churches will be respected, no strong move for convergence will be made manifest. The oriental churches, however, numerically insignificant, should be accepted and treated as churches as they deserve, not only in statements but *in practice* also. The oriental Catholic churches must be examples for the Orthodox churches. One should feel confident that in the Catholic communion, no church will be sidelined, ignored or excluded or restricted as a church. They should not be presented as churches living at the mercy of bigger churches. The Orthodox look into the affairs of the oriental Catholic churches in India and it is no good example and model for them. They know very well how the two oriental Catholic churches are territorially restricted and systematically impeded from giving proper pastoral care to their own

faithful outside Kerala. As long as the rights of the oriental Catholic churches are denied, no ecumenical discussion will progress seriously in India. Ten years have taught us this basic lesson.

The Full Truth

Ecumenical dialogues are aiming at the whole and full truth. No agreement for the sake of momentary understanding will ensure lasting peace and communion. This holds good in regard to history and theology. Biblical kerygma cannot be diluted and historical truths cannot be compromised. A re-examination of history has solely the purpose of reconciliation. That means, it is to purify the memory. The times have changed, the circumstances too, and the persons involved are no more. We have today a new life situation, a new mission and we confront new problems. We live at the dawn of a new millennium. Our time is fast changing, fast moving and fast progressing. We have no time to brood over the past mistakes and spend our energy over them and remain sorrowfully buried among them. We have to forgive and look forward and march forward, having in front of us our sacred goal. Otherwise we will be losing sight of our glorious mission.

Purifying our memories is absolutely necessary. Pope John Paul II said once: "There is need above all to dispel the disputes and condemnations of the past far from our memory and confide them to God's mercy. We must set to work building a future together, which shall be more in conformity with Christ's will for unity for all His disciples".⁸ H.E. Cardinal Willebrands

made this comment on the same subject: "Such oblivion ought to be extended also to all the events and actions of this sort, all the misunderstandings and insults ... The purifying and release of the memory is often in our day, the necessary precondition for any ecumenical commitment. The pardon and reconciliation must extend to the memory of the evil that has been done to one another in the past. Their memories have no further use except as a lesson, a sad experience that must help us to prepare, in the present, a better future".⁹ The Decree on Ecumenism¹⁰ and the recent Popes have asked pardon for the mistakes from the part of the Catholic church.

The History

After the arrival of St. Thomas in India in 52 A. D., the church of the St. Thomas Christians lived as one church and one society. It used the East Syrian (Mesopotamian) Liturgy. The leader of the church was the Archdeacon. It was the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic church of Christ. At the time of the Portuguese arrival, the bishops present here were from Mesopotamia. The last one, Mar Abraham died in 1597. The Portuguese missionaries made this church Roman according to the Western mentality of those days and imposed Latin bishops, and made this church part of the Western Church. The missionaries publicized in Europe that "this church was Nestorian, and that they in the Synod of Diamper (1599) brought it under Roman obedience". In fact, they subjugated this apostolic church to their colonial interest. It led to the Coonan Cross Oath in 1653 which even-

tually led to the division of the one church into two groups. One group continued to accept the Western missionaries and the other group opposing and eventually coming under the influence of the Antiochene Syrian Orthodox Patriarch.

The separation was very gradual. This separation was not based on any doctrinal issue. It was based on historical, sociological and psychological reasons. Even though the faithful were in two camps, they continued to use the same liturgy (reformed East Syrian liturgy of Bishop Francis Roz) and the same church buildings in many places. The early Antiochene prelates, who happened to come here did not introduce the Antiochene liturgy in all the churches. It was in 1876, at the Synod of Mulanthuruthy under the leadership of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Peter III, that the West Syrian Script and the West Syrian liturgy were introduced in the Malankara Church. The Patriarch did all he could to make this church Jacobite (the name used at that time). The Syrian Orthodox Patriarch and the leaders of the time instilled slowly in the minds of the people an anti-Roman attitude. The revolt against the Jesuit Bishop Francis Garcia in 1653 at the Coonan Cross Oath was misrepresented as a revolt against the Pope of Rome and the Roman Catholic church.

The Protestant missionaries of the Lutheran and the Anglican communions who came here in the 19th century also had their role in alienating the faithful and in instilling an anti Roman attitude. These

9 IS 25/11

10 UR 7:2

Protestant missionaries were committed anti-Catholics. They were teaching in the recently established Malankara (Jacobite) Seminary and were preaching in their churches. From the Catholic part, the last Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly too played his part in this process of alienation of the communities, calling the group which was not under him "heretics and schismatics". He gave orders not to communicate with them and not to have any engagement with them. So 19th century marked a turning point. It was during this period that there was real division and separation of the two communities. Still there were no doctrinal issues involved. In spite of the episcopal ban, the faithful of the two groups, wherever they lived together, mingled and entered into marriage alliance. So we cannot pinpoint a date when the two groups got separated one another. The Antiochenes in the 19th century also did not introduce any new doctrinal teaching here. It was just a change of the liturgical usage.

Establishment of the Catholicate (1912)

The Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Abd al Msih (+1915) established a Maphrianate (Catholicate) for the Malankara Church in 1912. Following this event, this church was divided into two groups again, namely Patriarch's Party (Bāwā kakshy) and the Catholicos' Party (Metrān kakshy). One group accepted the authority of the Patriarch Abdulla, and the other group rejected his authority and established the Catholicate. This division, unfortunately, continues even today. These two groups had three major civil litigations: the Vattippanakkēs (1913-1928), the Samudāyakkēs (1938-1958), and Randām Samudāyakkēs (1974-). This internal problem also tells upon the ecumenical involvement of the Malankara Ortho-

dox Church. It affects their attitude to those who are claiming primacies, whether Antiochene or Roman.

Reunion Movement (1930)

In 1930 Mar Ivanios (+1953) of blessed memory and Mar Theophilos, his suffragan (+1956), two prelates of the Malankara Orthodox Church entered into full communion with the Catholic church. This was less the result of theological dialogue, common statements, or the influence of western missionaries. Mar Ivanios was convinced that, for the full ecclesiality of a church, communion with the successor of Peter in Rome is necessary. He had ample proof for this in the liturgical tradition of the Syrian Orthodox church which he was using and also in the historical books which he read. In addition to that he initiated a reform movement, a spiritual renewal in the Malankara Orthodox Church through the Bethany Monastic Order (Order of the Imitation of Christ) which he started in 1919. Amidst the civil litigations between the two factions of the church, Bethany remained neutral aiming at the spiritual renewal, through retreats, conventions etc. In modern language it was spiritual ecumenism. By this he prepared a better disposed people of God, and the Lord of mercies showered His gift of unity upon them. From the result we can definitely say that it was God's work. In this century this movement is the unique ecumenical movement which was crowned with success. It opened the way for the full communion between the Malankara church and the Catholic church. Of course, Mar Ivanios and the Roman authorities were guided by the ecclesiology of those days. We cannot blame them for not having the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council. This divine action, however, was diversely

interpreted by various sections of the Malankara church. Some misrepresented it among the people and for some time there were hostilities between the Malankara orthodox and Catholic churches. It is clear that any division is painful.

Other Divisions

There were also other divisions in the Malankara Church in Kerala. The Thozhiyoor Church (1772) and the Mar Thoma Church (1889) were separated from the "Jacobite" Church in Kerala. The Thozhiyoor church came into existence following the action of a West Asian Jacobite Prelate, Mar Gregorios. After the Mavelikara Synod where the Jacobites parted company with the Anglican Missionaries in 1836, a lot of people left the church and joined the missionaries. The Anglican missionaries were partly responsible for the formation of the Mar Thoma Church after the latter's defeat in the civil litigations with the 'Jacobites' (1879-89). The divisions were also due to the excommunications and suspensions of the Malankara bishops by the Antiochene Syrian Orthodox Patriarchs. Thus Patriarch Peter III excommunicated Mathews Mar Athanasios, Thomas Mar Athanasios and the Thozhiyoor bishop Coorillos in 1876. Patriarch Abdallah excommunicated the Malankara Metropolitan Vattasseril Mar Divannasios in 1911, and Patriarch Yacoubk III suspended Augen Mar Timotheos in 1975. All these divisions and excommunications affected the attitudes of the Malankara Orthodox regarding other churches. According to them, their church was a church subjugated and persecuted by foreigners, whether West Asian or European, whether Jacobite, Catholic or Protestant. This attitude affects their ecumenical relationships.

Oriental Orthodox Churches

Some leaders of the Malankara orthodox church took the initiative of bringing the various non-chalcedonian churches together. The five Oriental orthodox churches had no common head, no common tradition, except their rejection of Chalcedon. There was no liturgical, cultural, linguistic or national unity among them. Only the Copts and the Syrians took part in the Council of Chalcedon of 451. The Ethiopians later came under Coptic influence; the Armenians changed their stand more than once. Only in 1876, the Malankara Church came under the jurisdiction of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch. At that time this church still had not inherited the anti-chalcedonian attitude of the Syrian orthodox church. All the West Asian Churches were under the oppression of the Arabs and Ottomans. The Ethiopians and Armenians were for long under Communist dictatorship.

The Malankara church was the only Oriental orthodox church in the free world. She has her own history; therefore, in spite of the fact that she had adopted the West Syrian liturgy, she could have taken an independent ecclesiological stand. Because of her joining the Oriental orthodox family of churches, she was forced to defend the anti-chalcedon stand of the Syrians and the Copts. For more than 1800 years, the Malankara church did not have the ecclesiology of the Oriental orthodox churches. Now she has to defend the Syrian orthodox position, although this one is in open conflict with that church for long. Her leaders say they are in communion with the Syrian orthodox church, but they are in civil litigation with her since 1974.

The faithful

In Kerala most of the faithful do not take seriously the "theological differences" of the theologians and of the church leaders because there is no real difference in the content of faith between the Catholic and the Malankara orthodox churches. The only ecclesiological issue left is the "Petrine Ministry". The faith of the Syrian orthodox and Catholic churches is the same. Between them is real communion, although not full. That is why the leaders of both churches can say: "We are almost one church". The same can be said of the Malankara orthodox church, since no theological issue separates the Malankara church from the Catholic Church. None of them has ever touched the content of faith; hence the difference is just regarding formulations only. On the basis of the agreement in faith and the sacramental structure of the church, the Syrian Orthodox and Catholic churches made an agreement on *inter church marriage*.¹¹ This arrangement functions very well in Kerala and elsewhere.

Conclusion

In ecumenical discussions between the Catholic and Malankara churches all the above mentioned factors should be taken into consideration.

1 History must be objectively evaluated.

2 In explaining the apostolic kerygma one should not be influenced by present day order and situation of the churches. The kerygma should be explained in the totality and in accordance with the teachings of the fathers.

3 Mutual recognition of legitimate autocephaly should precede any move for convergence and communion.

4 All concerned parties should be ready

to forgive each other. Assurances should be given to avoid the repetition of mistakes committed in the past.

5 Above all, the churches should have a will and earnest desire to enter into full visible communion.

The spiritual aspect of the communion should be taken into serious consideration. The gift of unity will be showered among a people spiritually prepared for it through conversion of hearts. This unity is God's grace. The time and way on which it will be realised is beyond man's calculations, but we have to prepare ourselves for it. Unless we do this, our discussions will be futile. Even after ten meetings one feels that not enough has been done in this line. It is good to ask: did our dialogue help us to have better ecclesial relationships? Did it bring the two churches closer? Many may give the answer in the negative. This does not mean that we should be pessimistic. As Christians, we must be men of hope. In Kerala, the churches are closer on the level of the faithful and their pastors than one thinks. Then the question is, where is the lack of closeness? On the level of some theologians? The people in Kerala practise ecumenism in an advanced manner. Then who is standing behind and pulling the churches backward?

Can we expect that the churches in Kerala enter into the new millennium with a better relationship among themselves in Jesus Christ, the Captain of our Salvation? Or shall we hand over to our posterity the divisions we have inherited from our predecessors?

Dr G. Chediath

Ecumenical Dimension of Evangelization

As we are approaching the end of the second millennium, a greater enthusiasm to commit herself to the cause of ecumenism is found in the Catholic Church. She is quite aware of the disunity among the Christian around the world and most ardently desires for unity. The present Holy Father has called for a special effort on the part of all to commit to the cause of ecumenism. In his own words:

In these last years of the millennium, the Church should invoke the Holy Spirit with ever greater insistence, imploring from him the grace of Christian unity. This is a crucial matter for our testimony to the Gospel before the world...The approaching end of the second millennium demands of everyone an examination of conscience and the promotion of fitting ecumenical initiatives, so that we can celebrate the Great Jubilee, if not completely united, at least much closer to overcoming the divisions of the second millennium. As everyone recognises, an enormous effort is needed in this regard (*Tertio Millennio adveniente*-34).

More than ever before, the Church is aware of the "tragic division" within her own bosom. This anomalous fact of division causes scandal in the world

and damages the cause of preaching the gospel to every creature. The present article sets out to enquire into the correlation between these crucial issues of division among the christians and the most holy cause of evangelization in the world.

Evangelization an Ecclesial Action

The pilgrim Church on earth exists in order to evangelize. Evangelization is the grace and vocation of the Church (EN 14). The Church on earth, the spatio temporal continuation of Jesus, has but one mission, to continue the mission "ad extra" of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit. Vatican Second has rediscovered this splendid theological foundation of the mission, which has its origin in the most Holy Trinity. The mission of the Church is a share in the mission of Christ and as Christ was sent from the Father, so is the Church sent into the world by Christ. She is missionary by her own nature (AG 2). The life of the Church is a share in the life of Christ. But a divided Christendom will neither be able to share the full life of Christ nor to carry out successfully its divinely entrusted mission of preaching the gospel to every creature. The history of missions heavily underscores this fact. Nobody can forget the amount of rivalry that existed between Catholics and Protestants in the missions.¹

Vatican Second's Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church,

1 W. B hlman, *God's Chosen Peoples*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, 1982, P. 85.

presents a superb theological vision of the Church as essentially missionary in character (AG 1). All that the Church does to continue the work of Christ is mission whether pastoral activity among Christians or the work of evangelization among non-Christians. Church's mission in effect is to bear witness to the fountal love of the Father. And she is in mission everywhere and her primary mission is called evangelization or preaching the good news of the Kingdom. This preaching aims at the formation of an ecclesial community. Now, that particular activity aimed at the conversion of the non-Christians is traditionally known as missionary activity and this still holds good.

The missionary activity is at the heart of the Church. As John Power notes, it is not an "optional extra" or a work of devotional supererogation.² Mission is built into the very being of the Church and has become an integral part of ecclesiology. Mission actually is the calling of the people to faith in God and in Jesus Christ *in the Church*. Mission belongs to the Church. She is, and will be, in the state of mission. It is not a superimposed duty to the Church. It is the very reason of her existence. The Church is mission.³ The Church is the initial budding forth of the Kingdom of God (LG 5). This Kingdom has been inaugurated by the "missio"

of the Son. Hence it is impossible for the Kingdom of God to be established among the non-believers, without the Church. So the Church "strains toward the consummation of the Kingdom and, with all her strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with her King" (LG 5). That is to say to be a Church without mission would be a contradiction, except at the final stage of the Church's development when mission is no longer necessary or even possible.⁴

A Divided Christendom

Due to historical reasons Christianity appears divided. Ever since the division of 11th century there has been attempts of union or reunion. But still full ecclesial unity remains a dream. The Church of Christ is one, holy, catholic and apostolic. These marks are by no means unique to any of the ecclesia communions, as they are recognized by the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Churches. Now, the Church is a visible institution established by Christ Himself and endowed by Him with the right doctrine and an inexhaustible fountain of "Grace".⁵ The Church is a Divine Body which exists independently of the efforts and conditions of its earthly members. Its doctrines can never be corrupted, its unity can never be broken, its ministry can never cease to exist. As has been expounded by Vatican

2 John Power, *Mission Theology Today*, Orbis Books, New York, 1971, P. 41.

3 G. Philips, *L'Eglise et son mystère au IIe concile du Vatican*, T. I, Desclée du Brouwer, Paris, 1967, P. 216.

4 K. Mc Namaya, "Go Make Disciples: the Implications for a Believing Community" in Edna Mc Donagh et al. (eds.), *The Church is Mission*, London, 1969, 24-29, P. 24.

5 Cf. Nicholas Zernov, "The Church and the Confessions", in *The Church of God: An Anglo-Russian Symposium* (ed) E. L. Mascall, SPCK, London, 1934, P. 211.

Second, the Church is the spatio-temporal continuation of Jesus Himself; it is His Body, a living organism. Again Church is the pilgrim people of God and this Church is in the state of mission always and everywhere. Now she strives to expand the body of Christ through the proclamation of the Gospel. This is her "inner exigency" to preach the Gospel and raise the congregation of the believers.

Now, this unique Body of Christ appears divided. "The Body of Christ is deeply wounded by its many divisions; being broken up into numerous confessions, each a potential rival to the other, each with its own memory often poisoned by interminable polemics, conflicts and even wars".⁶ This unfortunate situation urges us to strive towards Christian unity. Not only that this division is scandalous and blocks the way to faith to many, but division among Christians damages the most holy cause of preaching the Gospel.

Missionary Activity and Ecumenism

Ad Gentes, makes a distinction between mission, ecumenism and pastoral work. The Decree defines missionary activity as the work of the missionary going beyond to foreign territories preaching the Gospel and establishing the Church. The three ministries mentioned above are related to each other. But the Decree neither distinguishes nor identifies them.

That is, AG 6 does not make it clear how mission and ecumenism differ from one another. The earlier drafts of the Decree on Church's missionary activity did not study this question of ecumenism. Hence one of the sharpest criticisms against the final text of the schema on Missions was that it did not sufficiently take into consideration the ecumenical movement of our time.⁷

The word ecumenism designates the various activities aimed at bringing about unity among the different Christian Churches. The term is often used among ecclesiastical circles in relation with the recent "ecumenical movement" which has given shape to the World Council of Churches (WCC). It has got a Protestant background and ever since Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, the Catholic Church also collaborates with the WCC and fosters all kinds of ecumenical enterprises. The Catholic principles of ecumenism are enunciated in the Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*) as well as in the Directory on Ecumenism published recently by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Now, the word ecumenism is used to mean everything that brings Christians of all the Churches together into ever greater unity of faith, worship, mission and action in building up the Kingdom of God.⁸ Ecumenism or rather ecumenical movement is concerned with the formation and education of all Christians for the realization of unity among all. It aims at a real renewal

6 Cardinal Cassidy, "Ecumenism", in J. Porunedom (ed.), *Acts of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church*, Kochi, 1996, 159-165, P. 160.

7 X. Kochuparampil, *Evangelization in India*, OIRSI, Kottayam, 1993, p. 66.

8 J. Mustiso-Mbinda, "Ecumenism and Evangelization", in S. Karotemprel (ed.), *Following Christ in Mission*, Pauline Publications, Bombay, 1995, 152-159, p. 152.

of heart, a true conversion towards others. "There can be no ecumenism worthy of its name without a change of heart" (UR 7). Missionary preaching also aims at a change of heart, conversion, real metanoia towards the person of Jesus. This means creating in everyone an attitude of collaboration with other Christians for the diffusion of the faith without giving up one's own ecclesial tradition. For the Church of Christ is one. And this one undivided Church had respected diversities of the different apostolic Churches. Though tensions and problems were there in the first millennium, the Churches could remain in full communion with each other. Now, standing at the threshold of the third millennium the Catholic Church ardently thirsts for that moment of visible unity. As mentioned already Catholic Church's commitment towards unity is evidenced in the Decree on Ecumenism. Further reflections are spelled out in the recent Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* (1995) and Apostolic Letter *Oriente Lumen* (1996) and Ecumenical Directory (1996). Both missionary activity and ecumenism belong to the one and unique task of the Church, that is to bear witness to God's love made manifest in the Person of Jesus. The awareness of the relation between mission and ecumenism has its origin in the missionary field itself. Missionaries from different Churches were confronted by the scandal of division among themselves. And the ecumenical movement owes its origin to the appeal from missionaries who were conscious of the damage done to evangelization due to disunity among Christians in the mission.

Ecumenical Awareness

A growing awareness about the question of disunity could be found in all the

Christian Churches: Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic. For the Protestant Churches, the World Missionary Conference in 1910 at Edinburgh marks the beginning of a universal missionary awareness. One of the results of this ecumenical missionary assembly, was the establishment of the "International Missionary Council" (IMC). The delegates of this conference were well aware that effective mission requires unity. Ever since Edinburgh Conference, the Protestant Churches were confronted with the problem of agreement in doctrinal matters about the nature of the Church and its mission. We may note that this greater desire for unity of the Church and its mission has resulted in the formation of the ecumenical movement: Faith and Order (1927) and Life and Work (1937) and finally the formation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948.

The International Missionary Council (IMC) was integrated into the WCC in 1961 at the New Delhi Assembly. Since 1963 the Orthodox Churches also take part in the Missionary Conferences organized by the Protestant Churches. Prior to this, there was already the "Inter-Orthodox Missionary Centre" in Athens, which studies about the theoretical and practical problems of Orthodox missions. Fostering of a missionary and ecumenical conscience within the Orthodox churches throughout the world, is one of the renowned goals of this centre.⁹ A good number of articles and books, by eminent Orthodox scholars, the encyclicals issued by the Orthodox Patriarchs and the report of the Pan-Orthodox conferences do bear witness to the fact that the Orthodox Churches were very much interested in the question of Christian unity.

⁹ K. Muller, *Mission Theology*, Steyler Verlag, Nettetal, 1989, p. 41.

On the Catholic side, it is said that the movement towards unity had started already prior to Vatican Second. The Malines Conferences, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity all were instrumental in making the Catholics aware of the need for unity among the Churches. By any count, Vatican Second was a great ecumenical event. The very presence of the observers from Orthodox and Protestant Churches was an indication of the Council's ecumenical gesture. It is a well known fact how the Catholic Church now works for unity. Now, for us the question of unity is important in so far as it affects missionary work and mission theology.

Unity in Missions

Division is harmful to the cause of mission. "A divided Christendom cannot fruitfully present Christ among the non-Christians" (AG 15, UR 1). A divided Christendom will never convince an unbelieving world about Christ, the unique saviour of humanity. Eventhough the earlier drafts did not pay attention to this question of ecumenism in missions, the Decree on the missionary activity of the church has got at least five references to this: AG 6, 15, 29, 36 and 41. The ecumenical spirit is emphasized in this document. It stresses the urgent need for unity. A non-Christian cannot easily make out the difference between many Christian denominations. All speak about the most holy Trinity, Christ and Church. The separation between Churches is a stumbling block to the cause of evangelization. It tells upon the credibility of preaching. In the context of present quest for "authenticity", unity between

Churches becomes more than ever an essential condition for effective evangelization. It (unity) is a question of her (Church's) authenticity and credibility. A divided Church is a wounded body. The world needs the true body of Christ, undivided and without any blemish. The Church is essentially a eucharistic community-people of God around the altar. And missionary activity aims at building up true altar-communities, worshipping communities. The final goal is the formation of a eucharistic community, where the mysteries of our redemption are proclaimed and celebrated. The true body of Christ is built up through eucharistic celebration. Through the eucharist we reach full communion with Christ and with one another. But where the body of Christ is divided, where the full communion is lost, there, missionary work becomes meaningless.

Co-operation Between Churches

Both, *Ad Gentes* and *Unitatis Redintegratio*, call for unity and unified action in mission fields (AG 15, UR 4,10). AG 15 reminds us of the Co-operation between individuals themselves and between Churches of different denominations. "Let Christians work together especially for the sake of Christ, their common Lord. Let His name be the bond that unites them" (AG 15). The latter phrase "let His name be the bond that unites them", bears witness to the ecumenical dimension of the Decree. For it has been taken from the memorandum of Pastor Lukas Vischera, Protestant observer at the Council.¹⁰

10 A. G. De Pelichy, "La portée oecumenique du décret sur l'activité missionnaire de l'Eglise," in *Enquetes Docete* 19 (1966) 338-350, p. 341-42.

Catholic Church does not conceive unity as the return of others to the bosom of the true Church. It is no more accepting the uniformity of the Roman Church. The Church must by all means move towards Christ. This necessitates a coming together of all Churches. Vatican II recognizes the other Christian communities as Churches or ecclesial communities. The Orthodox Churches are named "Churches", while the Protestants are called ecclesial communities. The non-Catholic communities as such have a meaningful Christian role. They are not mere secular group of individual Christians. They are Christian communities or Churches in which the means of grace are available and in which the Holy Spirit is at work.

In short unity between all Christians is the goal of the Decree on Ecumenism. This unity is to be manifested in all realms and especially in the missions. Where there are more Christian Churches engaged in the work of missions, there should flourish above all an ecumenical spirit, a sense of unity. "All appearances of indifferences and all sorts of unwarranted intermingling as well as unhealthy rivalry are to be avoided in the missions" (AG 15). Communion between Churches and common witnessing is essential for fruitful evangelization.

The co-operation should not be restricted to mere socio-economic matters alone. They should co-operate and work together even in specifically ritual matters, too. There must exist mutual appreciation between Christian Churches. It shall

not be a question of understanding between individual persons alone. In missions what we need is authenticity of faith and charity more than conformity to particular denominations and mere sentimentality. The Directory on Ecumenism affirms that "the common witness given by all forms of ecumenical co-operation is already missionary" (DE 205).

Pope Paul VI rightly concludes that witness to unity which the Churches give, is highly demanded for the success of evangelization (EN 77). He reminds the missionaries that since they are preachers of the Gospel, they must show themselves to the faithful of Christ not as people divided and separated by disputes which do not contribute to edification, but as men strong in faith, who know how to co-operate, despite the disagreement of the moment....(EN 77). The sign of unity among Christians is a help as well as a way of evangelizing. The Directory on Ecumenism reminds us that there must be greater collaboration in the work of evangelization based on the foundation of Baptism and the patrimony of faith that is common between the Churches (DE 206). It is therefore obvious that the future of evangelization requires for its fuller effectiveness a renewed effort at ecumenism.¹¹

To sum up we may quote the words of John Paul II, during his visit to Goa in 1986. "The work of ecumenism demands our constant efforts and fervent prayers....In a certain sense, the unity of Christ's disciples is a condition for

11 B. Mc Gregor O. P., "Commentary on *Evangelii Nuntiandi*" in *Doctrine and Life* (1977) 53-97, p. 95.

fulfilling the mission of the Church; not only that, it is a condition for effectively proclaiming and consolidating faith in Christ...The unity of Christians is vital for the proclamation of Gospel".¹² Called to fulfil her mission in the modern world, the Church knows that she must live the mystery of unity in herself. We may reiterate that the purpose of this restoration of unity among Christians is not just to clear up the present confusions and conflicts, more than that it is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to the modern world.

Complexity of the Problem

The ecumenical co-operation and unity called for, involves a number of problems, both in theological and pastoral realms. Missionary activity for the Catholics, is an ecclesial action flowing from the very nature of the Church itself. Missions thus become, an "inner exigency" of the Church. The pilgrim Church is in a state of mission, rather the Church is mission. Pope John Paul II affirms that (mission) "evangelization is not a free choice for us, but a strict obligation; not an occasional or temporary task but a permanent, constitutive need of the Church".¹³ We cannot but uphold the specifically religious finality of evangelization. Of-course, we recognise that evangelization cannot be separated from human progress and development. Over against, this, we may consider the tendency prevalent among many Protestant Churches under the influence of WCC, that favours the reduction of the specifically spiritual finality to mere humanization and transformation. While

Catholics uphold the theological Trinitarian foundation for Church's mission, Protestants are drawn towards a mere Sociological principles of Church's mission.

Again, there are limits, as the areas of co-operation, as there isn't full communion and common eucharistic celebration the true bond of full communion. However Christians do have a common responsibility coming from Baptism the bond of unity, to proclaim the gospel to everyone in the world. Hence, all should earnestly try to find out common ground on which their collaboration may be based. All commitments to evangelization must be accompanied by similar commitment to ecumenism. And in this attempt the Oriental Catholic Churches do have a special obligation to work for unity with their own sister-Churches. Before concluding this short analysis we may make a few observations about the role and responsibility of the Oriental Churches in promoting Christian unity and preaching the gospel to all.

Oriental Catholics and Ecumenism

The Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches of Vatican Second points out:

The Eastern Churches in communion with the Apostolic See of Rome have the special duty of fostering the unity of all Christians, in particular of Eastern Christians, by prayer above all, by their example, by their scrupulous fidelity to the ancient traditions of the East, by better knowledge of each other, by working

12 See Pope John Paul II, "The Church is sent forth to promote harmony and peace," in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 10 February 1986, p. 17.

13 AAS 66 (1974) 557-564, p. 559.

together, and by a brotherly attitude towards persons and things (OE 24).

Every Church has got an ecumenical role, as the one Church of God is torn into different communities. Now, the Oriental or Eastern Churches have an added responsibility for fostering unity as there exist their own counterparts in the Orthodox Churches. Vatican Second has rediscovered the notion of communion ecclesiology whereby the Church is considered a communion of Churches. It has been opined by many that "the ecclesiology of communion is the central and fundamental idea of the council's documents".¹⁴ The point of departure in this new idea of the Church is the central event in the life of the Church, namely the eucharistic celebration presided over by the bishop himself, surrounded by his presbyters, the deacons, and the Christian people.¹⁵ Church is the eucharistic community nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ. Orthodox theologian, Nicholas Afanasiev, to whom the expression "eucharistic ecclesiology" owes its origin, has affirmed that "where there is a eucharistic assembly, there Christ abides, and there is the Church of God in Christ".¹⁶ For Afanasiev, eucharist is the Church, or the Church is the assembly gathered for the celebration of the eucharist. More or less the same idea has been expressed by the catholic theologian H. De Lubac in the expression: "the eucharist makes the Church; and it is the Church that makes the eucharist".¹⁷ Now, as Cardinal Ratzinger states this eucharistic ecclesiology is the same as "ecclesiology of communion".¹⁸ The Church of Christ is a communion of

Churches, having true apostolicity and catholicity made visible through the celebration of the holy eucharist. All the Oriental and Eastern Churches are apostolic in their origin and do possess true faith. The Catholic Church does recognize this fact and respect their traditions enshrined in the life of the Church and made manifest through the eucharistic celebration. There could be different dimensions and forms of ecclesial communion. In the case of the Oriental Catholic Churches, this communion is so intimate that they together with their own Orthodox counterparts, do have the same liturgical tradition and ecclesial expression. Hence the Eastern Catholics do have an added responsibility of fostering ecclesial communion which ultimately will result in a better evangelizing mission of the Church. Christianity is basically a liturgical religion. Worship comes first, then comes the proclamation. A liturgical celebration that doesn't have a post-liturgy, i.e. a liturgy after the liturgy, is meaningless. Here, the post-liturgy, signifies the missionary work. Liturgy leads us to missions-proclamation of the gospel and formation of the eucharistic assemblies. All the Eastern liturgies do have this missiological dimension. To summarise we may say that all the Catholic Eastern Churches which do have the common liturgical heritage with the Orthodox Counterparts, may also continue the same spirit in their "post-liturgical celebration", i.e. the missions. Let the missions of all the Churches be the communion of the missions of all Churches of Christendom.

Dr Xavier Kochuparampil

14 See "Final Report of the Extra ordinary Synod of Bishops 1985", in *Origins* 15 (1985) 444-451, p. 448.

15 J. M. R. Tillard, "The Church of God is a Communion", in *One in Christ* 17 (1981) 117-131.

16 Nicholas Afanasiev, "Una Sancta", in *Irenikon* 36 (1963) 436-475, p. 459.

17 H. De Lubac, *Méditation Sur l'Eglise*, Aubier, Paris, 1953, p. 103.

18 J. Ratzinger, "The Ecclesiology of Vatican II", in *Origins* 15 (1985) 370-376, p. 372.

The Byzantine Catholic Church in Slovakia

1 Introduction

The Byzantine Catholic Church in Slovakia has Antiochian roots, which is related to the traditional West-Syrian liturgy of which the Byzantine churches are the most predominant group. Due to the fact that this group is subdivided into Greek and Slavonic parts, the Eastern Church, in the territory of Slovakia, is called the Slavonic-Byzantine Church according to the special tradition into which it has grown.¹ The Slavonic-Byzantine Churches are generally associated with the work of St Cyril and Methodius, the "equal to the apostles," (*isapostoloi*,) missionaries of the Slavs. St Constantine, a monk who chose the name Cyril, and his brother, St Methodius, lived in the second half of the ninth century. St Constantine (827-869), came from Thessaloniki and was the pupil of Patriarch Fotius. In 863, on demand of the Great Moravian Duke Rastislav,² Emperor Michael III sent Constantine and his brother Methodius to Great Moravia to consolidate the Christian Church and culture there.³ The Byzantine mission met with the resis-

tance of the Frankish Bishop Viching, who dissolved the mission and drove the protagonists out. In spite of the fact that the Byzantine mission worked on the territory of today's Slovakia, which in the Middle Ages formed a part of Great Moravia only for a short time,⁴ it has left a lasting heritage. All the major old Churches are effected by the heritage of St Cyril and Methodius in Slovakia, including the Protestants. First of all, however, the Byzantine Catholic and the Orthodox Church claim to carry on the traditions of their heritage. The Western rite Catholics have pompous celebrations on the feast of the two missionaries. After the so-called Velvet Revolution in 1989, their feast is celebrated also officially by the State on July fifth. The Days of Slavonic Literature culminate on July fifth with a celebration for the two saints, St Cyril and Methodius. In the celebration there is some nonconformity between the Western and Eastern Church. The Western Church celebrates the feast only on July fifth (and this date is accepted by the majority of the population of Slovakia as well), and the Eastern Church, celebrates more

1 Organization according to Nadolski, 1989, p. 40-41.

2 The Orthodox Church declared this Duke a saint on October 29th and 30th in Presov. See Juriga, 1994, p. 301.

3 They created the Gogolithic alphabet on the basis of the Greek Minuscule for the Slavonic language into which they first translated the Book of Gospels and then other Biblical and liturgical books, but also books of law. Their work in the field of Church and culture in the past has been called the Byzantine Mission.

4 The mission lasted from 863 to 885.

feasts: on February fourteenth, the death of St Cyril, on April sixth, the feast of St Methodius, and the common feast of both saints which is celebrated on May eleventh.

2 The Name and the Origin of the Church

Although the official name of the Eastern Rite in Slovakia is referred to as the Slavonic-Byzantine Rite,⁵ in practice this has not been well accepted. In everyday language we speak about the Church as the Greek Catholic Church "*Gréckokatolícka cirkev*" and it is even used in official titles, (e.g. in the names of the parishes or other Church institutions). The term "Greek Catholic," was supposedly coined by Maria Theresa, the Austrian Empress and Hungarian Queen, who decreed this name be used, during the Vienna synod of the Eastern rite Catholic bishops of Hungary, which was held from March 1, 1773 until May 6, 1773. Slovakia was part of the Hungarian Kingdom until 1918 and thus part of the Habsburg Empire. The synod took place after a request from the bishops who did not want to be named "the United" or "the Uniaties" as they had been called instead of Greek Catholics.⁶ The motivation of the expression "Greek Catholic" does not originate

from the name of the country or state. The adjective Greek Catholic includes a metaphor. In its first component "Greek" refers to Ancient Greece (East), and its counterpart is Ancient Rome (West). The "Catholic" component in our region was reserved exclusively for Roman Catholics. It enabled the Roman Catholic Church to express the fact that they were loyal to Rome. The expression "Greek Catholic" gives a parallel meaning to the expression Roman Catholic. We cannot speak about the institutional formation of the Greek Catholic Church earlier than after the Uzhorod Union on April 24, 1646. The Union took place at a time when the Eastern Church of the territory of today's Slovakia was a part of the Mukachevo Bishopric. Invited by Bishop George Jakusic, from Eger, 63 Orthodox clergy came to the Uzhorod Castle on April 24, 1646 in order to unite with the Catholic Church by signing the Uzhorod Union. Some priests travelled there from the distant region Spis and Saris, but most of them came from the districts Zemplin and Uzhorod. From the districts further to the East (from Berehovo and the others), no one came. The Union came to life even without them and the priests who were present at this act returned home as Greek Catholics.⁷ By this act, which went into history as the Uzhorod

5 According to the commonly known model used in the Decree *Orientalium ecclesiarum*.

6 Compare Lacko, M., 1975, p. 320. The author mentions that they also demanded that the priest not be referred to as "*pop*", but instead "*Paroch*" (Parsons), from the word "*parochia*" (parish). By introducing the new names, in fact an augmentation, of terming arose. In the countryside the expression "*pop*" is still used today. In addition, there is a "*popana*" or "*(Popada)*" which refers to the priests wife.

7 The Byzantine Catholic Church in Slovakia will be referred to as the "Greek Catholic Church" from this point, even though in the English speaking world it is usually referred to as the "Byzantine Catholic Church".

Union the foundations were laid for the Greek Catholic Church in Eastern Slovakia, in the Subcarpathian region, today Subcarpatho-Ukraine, and in the neighboring territory of today's North-Eastern Hungary. The history of all Subcarpathian Greek Catholics is connected with the Mukachevo Bishopric which was founded by a Canon Law act by Pope Clement XIV when he issued the *bulle Eximia regalium* on September 19, 1771. The former Mukachevo Bishopric is the mother of all Greek Catholic bishoprics of the Subcarpathian region: Presov, Hajdudorog, Miskolc, Maramures (cf. Babjak, 1993, p. 12). The former eparchy in Pittsburgh, (USA) has its origin in it. Later it became an archbishopric and at the same time the new eparchies Passaic and Parma arose.

As a result of the expansive territory contained in the original Mukachevo eparchy, it was first divided into vicariates and then later new eparchies were founded. Emperor Francis made the decision to divide the area into new eparchies. First, he created the Presov eparchy. It consisted of 194 parishes and 152,000 members. On March 19, 1816 the emperor installed Gregor Tarkovic as the first bishop of Presov and at the same time installed Alexey Pocsy as the new bishop of Mukachevo following the death of Andrej Bacinsky.

3 Contemporary History of Greek Catholic Authors

There are many discrepancies concerning the ecclesiastical self-understanding of the Greek Catholic Church. The opinions of the historians differ in a certain sense about how to view past events. For example, the older historians accepted the Uzhorod Union as a definite historical event, from

which the new history of the local Church began to develop. This approach can be named, "The Uzhorod Bridge". This name implies that the Uzhorod Union caused a different turn, or there to be discontinuity in history, instead of just following the current trends. This is because the catholicity achieved by the Union in the 17th century forms connections with the catholicity before the first half of the 11th century even though the Union caused the Church to make changes quickly. Conversely, modern historians emphasize the continuous aspect of history within the Greek Catholic Church. This means that the Greek Catholic community in Slovakia has never been Orthodox (i.e. a full community with the Holy See of Rome). On the basis of this historic orientation the contemporary Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia considers itself to be the direct heir from St Cyril and Methodius heritage. In an effort to keep a safe distance from the Orthodox Church the modern authors more and more deny the historical period during which the Greek Catholic Church was supposedly part of the schism. This effort is most obvious in the biography of the Jesuit Priest Michael Fedor (1990). The author died in 1994, so now we can not continue a dialogue on this subject with him. The material collected, introduced and discussed by the author merely reveals that at least a part of the Greek Catholic community may have had continuity with the Church established by the apostles and teachers for the Slavs, with St Constantine, otherwise known as Cyril, the Philosopher, and with the archbishop St Methodius. In the year 863, their missionary work gave the foundations to the Church organization, to Church schools, culture and spirituality in the Great Moravian territory. The ninth century did not learn of the Eastern schism that culminated

in 1054 and thus St Cyril and Methodius preached faith as envoys of the universal Catholic Church. M. Fedor emphasizes that there exist numerous references to their subordination to St Peter's successor (e.g. the mention of their successful defense of the liturgical books in Old Church Slavonic language in the audience with the Pope or the fact that St Methodius was an ordained bishop by the Pope. The succeeding schism, as it is known, was learned of by the general public only sporadically. These are some arguments used by authors to support the fact that the Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia has always maintained unity with Rome.

Slovak authors also have found evidence in ancient monasteries to support the fact that the Greek Catholic Church has always maintained unity with Rome. In Slovakia there were Greek monasteries which were founded in ancient Hungary by King St Stephan (97-1038) and his successors. Their position must have been significant as they were known at the Holy See of Rome. This is proven by a letter written by Pope Innocent III to Duke Emeric in 1204. He mentions with reproach the only monastery in the Latin Rite because all the others were Greek Catholic (Byzantine). It is remarkable that the hermits St Svorad (Zoerardus), Andrew and Benedict from the XII century maintained the eastern monastic rules according to Abbot Zosime, even though during this time Benedictine monasteries were well known. The personal spirituality and asceticism of the monk St Svorad is in full agreement with the model of eastern monastic practice (cf. Pavlovic, 1993, p. 58 sq.).

In the XIII century, Slovakia still was not aware of the schism. This was due to the uncommunicative character of the

period. There are historical resources in which Bishop James (Jacobus) from Farkasovce, a village in the Spis region, is mentioned as being of the Greek rite. Thus, this is considered evidence of Catholic continuity. In addition, another Eastern Rite priest from Spis Lucas is mentioned. It is interesting that after his name there is a Latin apposition *praepositus*. M. Fedor interprets this title as a provost (i.e. as a chief church dignitary). This interpretation, however, provokes the question of why an Eastern Rite priest had the rank used by the Western clergy. It is possible that in that period there was a sort of rite-promiscuity as late Professor Anton Bagin discusses (1986). It is not out of the question that the word "*Praepositus*" meant simply "a superior". Michael Lacko, a Slovak historian (1965), believes that modern Greek Catholics do not represent an uninterrupted line with the Cyrillo-Methodian Church. He believes that they also lived during the schism. Before him the historian, Ondrej R. Halaga (1947) also agreed that a great many Eastern Rite inhabitants came to Slovakia in the period of the Valachian colonization from the 14th century onward. They were Orthodox and became Greek Catholics after the Uzhorod Union. The contradicting statements can be explained by noting that even if two lines existed, a Catholic and an Orthodox one, they were certainly mixed up by marriages. The faith and not the origin is significant, nor the proofs of the "purity" of the Confession. These theories of development serve to draw a vector of orientation to the Orthodox Greek Catholic controversies which have arisen especially after the political move in 1989. For the Greek Catholics the starting point is the year 1054, with the following argument: "Before 1054 all were Catholics;" for the Orthodox

the starting date is the date of the Uzhorod Union (April 24, 1646), so that they can reply, "Before it you were Orthodox, too".

There is, however, no official forum for this dialogue yet. The controversial statements are discussed in isolation by the Catholic or the Orthodox side. As it will be shown later the historic facts have a crucial significance in the legal arrangement of the property between the Orthodox and the Greek Catholic Church both in the Slovak and the Czech Republic.

The Orthodox side often explains that the Uzhorod Union was realized by violent means. On the other hand, the Greek Catholic author Michael Lacko states in the above quoted work, that the Union had inner motivation. He speaks about spiritual and material motives in the following sequence:

- 1) The effort to escape the influences and the oppression of the Protestants.
- 2) The wish to have a more educated clergy and a better spiritual administration.
- 3) The reinstatement of the primary unity between the Western and Eastern Church.

The situation in the Orthodox Church before the Union actually points to the fact that the Union was welcomed because it offered many advantages. As to the education of priests, it took place in the priest's family. The married priest prepared his sons for the priesthood. His task was to teach his sons to read the Cyrillic alphabet and to teach him the liturgical ceremonies. As far as the Orthodox clergy's social position is concerned, a possibility appe-

ared for them to receive the same privileges as the Roman Catholic clergy. For the rural priest who was a serf and usually had numerous children it was a great thing that, as a priest and father, could be freed from serfdom.

The formal educational system for new priests, however, improved very slowly. At the end of the 18th century some Greek catholic priests were sent to Roman Catholic seminaries to Trnava, Eger, Vienna and Budapest. It was only a small number of men that received this education and they were designated for higher Church positions than just a parish priest. The credit for creating better education for priests must be given to Bishop Michal Manuel Olshavsky (18th Century), who bought a house in Mukachevo and founded a two-year school of theology there. This school made it possible to establish a proper seminary by Maria Theresa in the castle of Uzhorod in 1775. In the past, the castle belonged to the Drughet family and the Uzhorod Union was signed there.

It is difficult to evaluate the motives that gave rise to the Union by today's criteria. Nevertheless, present-day historians keep examining this period from various perspective. In the spirit of contemporary catholic ecclesiology there now is a retreat from emotional evaluations and instead a rational approach from a strictly factual viewpoint is what is natural.

This year (1996) marks the 350th anniversary of the Uzhorod Union. It was celebrated by its followers in Uzhorod and the Ukraine. On this occasion Pope John Paul II issued a pontifical letter. Among other things he reminded all Catholics that

a split in the Church is against Christ's will and to the world is a venial offense.⁸

4 Latinization as a Historical Process

In the recent past the notion of latinization in the Eastern Church, which in our country was a minority, was a taboo. Presently, it is used as a common religious expression in addition to the option of unionism with its own historical contents. With theologians abroad, especially on Rome's academic ground, this expression has been used for a long time already. Within all Eastern Churches and thus in the Eparchy of Presov, too latinization is cautiously discussed. However, it is more and more obvious that after the fall of Communism (1989), the Greek Catholic Church in our country calls attention to itself and in its self-reflection it aims first of all at a renewal on all levels. In this process it necessarily realizes its own faults in the past. It has to be said that latinization was a process amidst a global development, which was stipulated by two currents. Firstly, from outside, because of a forced westernization and secondly, from the inside by a voluntary adaptation to the western model of the Church under the influence of a falsely understood empathy and also due to an inferiority complex.

4.1 Latinization from outside

The Catholic theologians realize today that "Unionism" is one of the consequences of the Uzhorod Union

because it bases its belief in a mis- understanding of unity in the past. It is known that in the past Western (i.e. Latin hierarchy) tried to subordinate the Eastern hierarchies and the clergy. The Roman Catholic Bishopric of Eger e.g. tried to subordinate the Mukachevo bishops in the East, by wanting them to be vicars for the Eastern rite country. Without the consent of the Roman Catholic Bishopric in Eger, the Greek Catholic bishops were not allowed to build new churches, to establish new parishes, ordain and transfer priests, nor do visitations in their parishes. The Greek Catholic priests found themselves in the position of only chaplains in comparison to the Latin priests. If any Greek Catholic clergy resisted, the bishop in Eger complained to Rome and so e.g. the congregation *Propaganda fide* issued a decree on June 20, 1718 without anyone examining the real situation. The decree mandated that the bishop of Mukachevo be deprived of all his rights. Similarly on May 8, 1747 a decree was made by bishop Barkoci in Eger which degraded the Greek Catholic priests to only assistants of Latin priests within their rite. This had considerable economic and social consequences. After the complaints during the Greek Catholic synod in Mukachevo (February 6, 1749), the complaints were sent to the Holy See in Rome. The unequal position of the Greek Catholics began to mitigate only after Maria Theresa's intervention in 1756. Bishop Barkoci visited Mukachevo on the 14th and 15th of July in 1748

⁸ The pontifical letter *Orientale lumen* was published in Slovak with the contribution of the association *Spolok Svätého Vojtecha*.

accompanied by 200 soldiers and demanded from Bishop Olshavsky that he take an oath of obedience. Bishop Olshavsky capitulated, however the process of acquiring independence began anyway. In 1749, the eparchy turned to the Imperial Court in Vienna with its demands. In the year 1764 Professor Jan Bradac was sent from the Mukachevo Theological School to Vienna in order to resolve the conflict. The end result was that on December 19, 1771, Pope Clement XIV established the eparchy in Mukachevo, (cf. Vasil 1996, p. 9-11).

Presently, there are still misunderstandings between the Orthodox and Greek Catholics concerning "unity". While the Greek Catholics feel that they are builders of unity, the Orthodox are convinced that the Union brought only new complications, since the Church has remained united according to the Orthodox. The dialogue often fails due to the unwillingness of either side to give up their emotional positions. The period of Communist license brought much injury and pain into the Eastern church that is still present today. The aim of the Communists was to establish atheism in Czechoslovakia. On April 28th, 1950 in the hotel Cierny Orol in Presov the so-called *Sobor* (Council) was held. There were 720 participants from which 40 were Greek Catholic priests. Out of these 40, only twelve supported the "council". Many participants were unwillingly present, some of the people were brought from the villages and schools by fraud-under the pretense of going to a peace manifestation. When the participants became aware of the deceit, they tried to leave, but the doors were watched by the police. The "council" accepted

the dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church. Meanwhile Bishop Pavol Peter Gojdic and assistant Bishop Vasil Hopko were captured and arrested. About two hundred priests and their families were deported and exiled to Bohemia. They were not allowed to return to Slovakia. Religious people who demanded the service of a Catholic priest were persecuted. Through this action called "P" the violent change to Orthodoxy was realized. The goal of the communists was to first cause this change to Orthodoxy and then to atheism. In a current Orthodox journal, "Odkaz sv. Cyrila a Metoda", ("The heritage of St Cyril and Methodius"), the Presov *Sobor* of 1950 is seen as the renewal of the Orthodox Church. Similarly the Orthodox author P. Ales (1993, p. 37), states that the council made a return to the original Orthodox faith, though he admits it was not fruitful. During the era of Alexander Dubcek in 1968 (the so-called Prague Spring), the organizers of the abolition of the Greek Catholic Church themselves considered the action to have been a mistake. For example, L. Holdos, a high clerk of the Slovak bureau for Church matters, says, "Retrospectively I look upon the decision of the Presov Council as anti constitutional" (cf. Fedor, 1993, p. 304). When in 1968 changes in the Communist leadership took place, a release for the outlawed Greek Catholics also occurred. On June 13, 1968 the Greek Catholic Church was allowed by the governmental issue No. 70/1968.

After the Warsaw Pact army occupation of Czechoslovakia, the political situation reversed so that a full

restoration could not be realized. Another suppression of religion followed. Greek Catholic seminarians were allowed to study at the Roman Catholic Cyrillo-Methodian Theological School in Bratislava only in very limited numbers. Thus, several generations grew up strongly influenced by western thinking and practice. Final freedom for the Greek Catholic Church began after 1989. Subsequently, there was a period of returning church buildings, and real estate, but this was accompanied by considerable difficulties. The Greek Catholics claimed their previously confiscated property in agreement with the law concerning restitution. The Orthodox retaliated against the process, since they argued that they had cared for the property, including investments for half a century. At the same time in some parishes a change in confessional identity set in. The process of change was at times very complicated. For example, if a former entirely Greek Catholic village now had a larger percent of Orthodox faithful, they were the descendants of Greek Catholic predecessors who built the church. It was not clear to whom the church would belong. The solution of complicated controversies as well as the loosening of tension between the faithful was taken over by the state. In 1950 it was also the state who caused the problems that are still present today. The Catholic side points at the obvious collaboration of the Orthodox church with the communist regime. On the other hand, the Orthodox side keeps a distance from the events of 1950. They refer to the legal proceedings as *vis major* and remind the public that the Roman Catholic Church collaborated with the state administration too, in the "Peace" Association called *Pacem in terris*. The state administration was not

able to reach agreement between the two Churches and offered the Orthodox Church financial compensation for the buildings they had to abandon. From these financial means, the Orthodox have built several new churches already.

In the past, the latinization pressures from outside, which evoked unionist tendencies, rose in the contemporary social political conditions mentioned already. Later they were felt by inadequate interferences by the Latin Church. Finally the Orthodox Church together with the state power caused latinization in the Communist era. The Greek Catholics always wanted to distance themselves from the Orthodox who collaborated with the communist regime.

An intensive latinization takes place in Latin convents. It is known that in East Slovakia, which is the most religious region in the country, the number of spiritual vocations is the highest and the abortion rate is the lowest. Western orders take candidates from among Greek Catholic girls without changing their rite. The uninformed Greek Catholic girls are convinced that by entering an order their rite changes automatically. They incorrectly presume that their Order has the competence to do acts which are reserved for the Pope only. We can see evidence of this phenomena in male Orders also. It can be traced back to the practice of training young Eastern rite men in a western environment. The "danger" arose that they would learn about the married priesthood that was allowed in the Eastern rite. The men would decide to accept the sacrament of marriage and then the sacrament of the priesthood in

the eastern rite. The Western rite theological professors believed it to be advantageous to withhold the information about this possibility during the critical period of development and detain it until the young man took his holy eternal vows.

4. 2 Inner Latinization

Between the external and internal latinization of the Eastern Church a successive transition set in especially after the coming of communism. This was natural because the clergy and the religious people adapted to the latinization within their Churches throughout the course of history to such an extent that they did not perceive them as foreign. Besides, they aspired to be different from the Orthodox.

In spite of a relative settlement in the relationship between these two Churches the tension still continues. In some places it is even hostile, especially with the old generation of parishioners. One way to avoid conflict is to cultivate indifferent standpoints. For example, at the first visit of Pope John Paul II in Slovakia in 1990 the representatives of the Orthodox Church took part in the official celebrations. On his second visit on July 2, 1995 in Presov the Slovak Orthodox were missing. Similarly in May 1996 when Alexij II Patriarch of Moscow and all of Russia, visited Slovakia, the Greek Catholics were not officially represented.

The religious people worshipping in the Eastern rites now have new ethics to consider. It is only a question of time

before the youngest generation, who have no experience with the totalitarian regime, begin to change. The older generation is strongly marked by an aversion toward such a form of church organization which was carried through in collaboration with the atheist regime in Stalin's regime. In spite of this bitter historical experience Pope John Paul II urgently summons the members of Eastern Catholic Churches to leave the hurt and pain of the past behind and to take up a new period of history.⁹

After the consolidation of the Greek Catholic Church from the year 1989 it became evident that from the original number only 70-75% of the Greek Catholics declared themselves members of this Church. The rest did not remain in the Orthodox Church only, but instead only it appeared that a considerable part of the parishioners remained in the Latin Church.

The conditions that encouraged so many to remain Orthodox rose during socialism especially while the Greek Catholic Church was forbidden. The religious people practicing the Eastern rite were served by a Western-rite priest who had a relatively greater freedom. Remaining Greek Catholic was a concern to the parishioners who resisted the influence of the Orthodox Church, though the two churches had identical rites. The second cause of the preponderance of the Roman Catholic Church is its better organization, and finally that most people preferred the Western Church to the Eastern. Soon it became evident that the word "rusnak" which originally

⁹ See *Oriente lumen*.

was an equivalent term for a practicing Greek Catholic—regardless of nationality—gradually developed a negative connotation. The religious people living in good consciousness with the universal Church were attracted by the world-wide character of the Western (Roman) Church, because of its shorter ceremonies among other reasons.

The Greek Catholic laymen who had their children, for any reason, baptized in a Roman Catholic parish often thought that their children were already Roman Catholics. Some Latin priests never clarified to these children whether they were Roman Catholic or Greek Catholic. In such cases, however, to change the name of the child's religion because of baptism in a Roman Catholic Church is clearly a violation of Article 4 of the Decree about the Eastern Catholic Churches, as well as of Canon Law III (CIC), and of Canon Law 29 of Eastern Churches (CCEO).

It is a common practice that Latin priests pay pastoral attention to Eastern Catholics without instructing them about their duty to practice their Eastern rite and pass on their traditions to future generations. It is not merely a matter of jurisdiction, but first of all, of understanding the matter on a charismatic platform.

In the Latin clergy, but mostly among laymen of the Roman rite, sometimes an antipathy towards the married clergy of the East is experienced, as if they were inferior. This is the case especially in the rural areas. In urban areas the situation seems to be the opposite. The Roman Catholics go and seek counselling with a Greek Catholic married priest for help in their problems, especially in family matters.

Partly, the Greek Catholic Church itself is at fault being insufficiently appreciated. The church and especially its clergy are not appreciated or admired when they abandon or discontinue developing the charisma of its original spirituality.

5 Spirituality and Liturgical Life

The Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia has no canonized Saints. Presently, the beatification of the two recent bishops who died during the communist era, and who had no successors until 1989 is being discussed.¹⁰ The local Church would gain great examples of canonized saints.

Characteristic in the Greek Catholic faith is the devotion for the Virgin Mary. Pilgrimages are centered around praising the Virgin Mary and take

¹⁰ Bishop Pavol Peter Gojdic, OSBM (1888–1960), died in prison in Leopoldov (West Slovakia) as a result of an advanced form of cancer. Bishop ThDr Vasir Hopko (1904–1976) died of old age, however its process was certainly speed up because of persecution. Presently, it is not clear if beatification will be the result of martyrdom for their faith. In prayers for their beatification, which was published by the eparchy, it was formulated cautiously; "They paid a price for freedom and life, so that all would be one..." There are voices which allege that these bishops did not die as martyrs.

place on certain days that correspond to one of the glorious events that took place in her life. The only exception is in Klokocov, a small village, where the centre of attention is a miraculous picture. The most famous pilgrimage takes place in Lutina, a village North-East of Presov. In 1987 Pope John Paul II promoted the church there to a *Basilica Minor*. In addition to Lutina other pilgrimages take place in Klokocov, Rafajovce, Krásny Brod, Malà Pol'ana, Levoca, Stropkov, Secovská Polianka Buková Hôrka, Sasová, Circ, Kosice and Presov. In the last years it became very popular to make pilgrimages to Litmanová, in the district Starà Lubovna, which can be called a small Slovak Medjugorie. During the pilgrimages there are numerous liturgies celebrated and many of the penitents request confessions. Various Marian services are popular (Molebens) which were written by Basilian monks. These services are held in addition to the Divine Liturgy especially in May, and usually in the evening hours. Subsequently, in June special services are

held in the Honor of the Holy Heart of Jesus. Similarly on the first Fridays of the month, the day of penitence, a service is held with a Eucharist exhibited in a calix or in the monstrance of the Church. The month of October is consecrated for the Mother of God; each day the rosary is prayed,¹¹ and in Lent the Way of the Cross is celebrated every week.

The devotional services taken over from the Roman Church were accepted to such an extent that they often displaced the original ones, for example, The Canon of Andrew of Crete which had been read during Lent. In some parishes Vespers and Morning Services are still celebrated, and in some churches the Liturgy of pre-sanctified gifts or the Acathist to the Mother of God are now being reinstated. The younger priests and the seminarians realize that the outward appearance,¹² is very close to that of the Latin Church and that it is the consequence of the historical development. They also realize that this outward appearance are of only secondary importance to the spirituality

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- 11 This prayer is prayed by the Greek Catholics with some small modifications: at the end of Ave Maria they leave out the appeal: "Holy Mary, Mother of God..." and they add an exclamation "...for you gave birth to Christ, the Redeemer and Savior of our souls". Similar modifications in the Eastern spirit are used in other devotions (services) taken over from the Latin rite, e.g. the Way-of-the-Cross during Lent.
- 12 This refers to wearing the Roman Catholic clerical robes, the shaving of the beard, the introduction of the dalmatic for deacons, not wearing maniples, (with the explanation that the West abolished maniculus), but especially to many liturgical acts which concern mainly the clergy. The faithfuls sit in pews during the Divine services, they do not light votive candles, and in many parishes they do not honor icons except the epithapios which is exhibited on Good Friday.

of the Eastern Church. They want to renew their spirituality in the Holy Spirit. The features of the liturgical life of the Greek Catholics corresponds with the norms of the Byzantine-slavonic rite. For the Slovak eparchy to be considered acceptable, they must use liturgical books published in Rome for the Slovak eparchy. *The Liturgicon* is used with the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom and of St Basil the Great; which is read ten times a year; the liturgy of pre-sanctified gifts (during Great Lent), the Apostles, and the Book of Gospels and Trebnik (Euchologion). All of these are of Ruthenian recension. Until recently in our parishes the latinized form, according to the so-called *L'vov-Liturgicon* was valid. Besides the Old-Slavonic language the liturgies are read or sung in a living language—in contemporary Slovak. The translation of the liturgy was prepared during the totalitarian regime. The first translation of liturgical texts was made by the Greek Catholic priest Pavol Spisak and published in Nitra 1933; it got the Imprimatur from bishop P. P. Gojdic. This translation was not meant for liturgical use. The texts from 1986 are not satisfactory either from the theological or from the dogmatical and liturgical aspects. Therefore the Congregation for the Eastern Churches initiated a new translation which is supposed to avoid the latinization and reform elements in order to emphasize the original values.

Other western ideas were carried through in other Divine services as well, but most notable was the global shortening of the rituals. After overcoming the most significant problems in the

eparchy, the residential bishop dealt with this question. In the summer of 1996 he abolished the latinized liturgical texts as well as the tri-cycle-lectionaries which had been used since 1986 instead of the Byzantine arrangement of the Book of Gospels and the Apostle. He created a liturgical team, whose goal it was to translate the original liturgical books, so that they would truly correspond with the holy traditions of the Eastern Churches. There are many priests currently in pastoral service, who studied at the only Roman Catholic Faculty in Bratislava during the totalitarian regime. Now they are faced with the task of intensely studying the Eastern liturgy in its unlatinized original tradition, to acquaint parishioners with it, and begin to practice their original traditions. The residential bishop suggests, that for this purpose the member of the liturgical team should give lectures to the deans in each district and through them teach the priests. These efforts have been accepted with understanding.

After 1989 several sacred buildings have been built. The architects did not have a complete understanding of the purpose of Eastern architectural space. However, with our new understanding we now can avoid architectural mistakes and use traditional Byzantine architecture and sacred art. There are many different traditional designs that are now being discovered for making devotional objects and liturgical clothes. In the past, the clothes were made by nuns, in bad taste, and with no sense of art. In the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, reforms that were applied in the West were also applied

in the East. For example, many priests wished to turn the altar to face the people, to remove or reduce the iconostasis and made the liturgy "communicative" in the Western spirit. The real impediment to "communicativeness", however, appears to be the stiffened Post-Tridentine-Forms. For instance, because of the Western influence they have installed three steps leading to the altar, which reduces or retards most of the movements of the so-called liturgical circling, the stretching of the hands and other elements which in fact do not exist anymore in the Western rite either.

Due to the twenty year long ban of the Greek Catholic Church and the extremely reduced number of seminarians, there still is a lack of priests. The new priests usually enter pastoral service immediately after their theological study and they often are assigned to serve several parishes. On Sundays the priests celebrate three or even four liturgies because no one except a priest can consecrate the Eucharist, as is needed on Sundays and feast days. The regulations of the *Decree Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (Article 15), made the sanctification of the feast days easier, but their introduction into practice would seem strange to people. The religious like to receive the Eucharist at daily Divine Liturgy during the whole year, not just during the Lenten Season, with the exception of Good Friday. When it is technically possible, they receive the Eucharist even two times a day as the C. C. E. O. does not

say anything definite about this practice. As far as the Greek Catholic youth are concerned, they like to take part in major Divine services and prayer assemblies where they like singing by rhythmical religious songs accompanied guitar.

It is generally known that religious icons represent an essential feature of Eastern spirituality and that they stand in the centre of its Divine services.¹³ In the practice of the Greek Catholic Church, however, it has not been consequently affirmed. The icons gradually have become looked upon as more or less special decorations in the iconostasis. The icons' meaningfulness should be evident in the artistic elaboration and their practical arrangement. It has to be said that designing iconostasis, was a long process lasting centuries, which was directed hierarchically, but later also spontaneously. This phenomena can be well observed e.g. on the icons from the 16th century and perhaps even earlier. The oldest period of latinization had its roots in the territorial position of the eparchy, in surroundings; which made it possible to accept Latin influence.

A new period can be defined originating from the Uzhorod Union. The latinization of the Eastern Church, as a historical process, deserves special theological study. The Orthodox Churches were not able to withstand its influence either. We can speak therefore more generally about the Eastern Church, which has found itself in a crisis in

¹³ e.g. H. Fischer, a Protestant (!) author wrote on this topic (1995).

many aspects of its existence. The greatest loss perhaps is the fact that the reverence for icons has gradually vanished and now the people are ignorant about the icons' meaning¹⁴

Different spiritual movements which were successful in the Western Church before, tried to restore spiritual life in the Greek Catholic Church (e.g. Neocatechumen movement, Focolare etc.). It becomes, however, more and more evident that the path to renewal leads first of all through a revival and deepening of the charisma of Eastern spirituality-as it is emphasized in the *Instruction for Developing Liturgical Orders* (CCEO). According to it the three initiation sacraments should be administered at the same time to children. Until now baptism and confirmation were administered at the same time, but the Eucharist was only given to school children after catechism and confession on the feast of First Communion.

The Divine Liturgy of the Eastern Church was one of the sources of inspiration for the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council. As a result of this inspiration, the Roman Catholics introduced the "Common prayers of the faithful" before the offertory, according to the model of the Supplication Litany (*Ecteny*), the procession with the Book of Gospels after the model of the Small Entrance, and communion under both species etc. The

Latin Church was inspired after the Council, to put more emphasis on the celebration of the liturgy. After the Tridentine Council, the liturgy was interpreted first of all as a sacrifice and the importance of the celebration diminished. The East should reflect on the Second Vatican Council as a self-confirmation and strengthening of their good traditions. By no means does the Council want to oblige the Eastern Church by jurisdiction nor give mandates for liturgical reforms within it as it did for the Latin Church. The only valid challenge of the council is a summons to renewal. This can be understood in the Biblical sense: go back to your original love.

8 Structure, Schools and the Religious Life

As to the organization and administration of the eparchy it consists of thirteen deaneries: Bardejov (21 parishes), Humenne (43 parishes), Kosice (12 parishes), Michalovce (36 parishes), Poprad-Banská Bystrica (28 parishes), Bratislava (1 parish), Presov (18 parishes), Starà Lubovna (18 parishes), Spisskà Novà Ves (9 parishes), Svidnik (37 parishes), Trebisov (20 parishes), Trebisov-Dobrà (8 parishes), and Vranov and Topl'ou (21 parishes).

The Czech and Moravian Greek Catholics originally belonged to the eparchy of Presov, also. They were governed by a bishop-vicariat. After

14 I gave a lecture on more detailed deformation that took place, entitled "The Slovak Greek Catholics and their past", which took place in Michalovce (Eastern Slovakia) on June 3, 1996. The journal is currently in print.

Czechoslovakia was divided it became separate and since 1996 it has become an independent eparchy lead by Bishop Ivan Ljavinec. There are five deaneries which belong to his eparchy: Prague, Plzen, Ostrava, Brno and Liberec.¹⁵ At the head of the Church in Slovakia is the Bishop Monsignor Ján Hirka of Presov. He has an assistant Bishop Monsignor Milan Chatur. The Greek Catholic eparchy together with the dioceses of the Roman Catholic Church form a special structure which determines the organization of the Catholic Church in the country as a interritual territory. It has to be said that the Greek Catholics are a minority even in Eastern Slovakia. In spite of that the division of the eparchy into smaller units has been considered. For example in Presov an arch-bishopric will be created instead of one bishopric and the creation of two more bishoprics are being considered in Eastern Slovakia and one bishopric for the diaspora (Central and Western Slovakia form a diaspora). It is estimated that about 20,000 people originally of the Eastern rite worship in the diaspora, but now worship in the Roman rite. The first steps of reorganization of the Eastern Church have been taken in the Vatican. For the diaspora perhaps a vicariat will be established first, and then later a bishopric. Up to now there is only one parish in diaspora and that is in the capital, Bratislava. It also has a mission Church in Nitra. The Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia includes many nationalities, first of all Slovaks,

Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Hungarians and Romany (Gypsies). From a territorial stand-point the Greek Catholic Church forms one extended eparchy (diocese), which spreads all over Slovakia, but includes first of all Eastern Slovakia.

The younger generation of seminarians now prepare for their future as priests in the Greek Catholic Theological Seminary in Presov. The highest degree the faculty grants is a "Magister of Theology". Every year laymen are admitted to study there also. In the same town and university the Orthodox also have their seminary. A close professional cooperation between the two institutions remains a task for the future. The Faculty aspires to acquire accreditation to teach other subjects and to grant higher academic degrees, so that it can offer other disciplines and degrees, besides the basic theological education to their students. It is hoped that if other disciplines are studied, remarkable articles on the Eastern literature, Eastern iconography. Byzantine chant and Eastern comparative law might come to life. These are missing now and their lack is felt by the Eastern as well as by the Western rite Christians, if they want to develop a full sense for the universal character of the Church. A task for Greek Catholic theologians will surely be to elaborate their own pastoral theology, that would correspond with the spirit of the East. At present we have no professional theological journal dealing systematically with the questions of the

15 There was a short news article published in the journal "*Glaube in der 2 Welt*", 1995, p. 9.

Eastern Church. This is due to the fact that most of the priests are absorbed in pastoral work—a consequence of the twenty year long ban of the Church.

The consciousness of the Greek Catholics is that they are of one faith with the Roman Catholics. On the other hand, this consciousness causes that the Greek Catholics do not have any of their own authors writing theological books and also because they believe that people of one faith must also have the same way of articulating that faith. In this way of thinking there is a short circuit, since one part of articulation is the celebration of faith and this is different between the two faiths. The delusion of unity subdues the creative activity in such a sense that ambitious authors rely upon the greater number of authors in the Western Church who write on the same topic.

The late Bishop Hopko wrote in his book that the merit of the Uzhorod Union in the theological field is as follows: "We obtained a higher knowledge, deeper theology because the Catholic Church excels in searching with an iron logic the beginning of everything, it submits proofs...No other Church has such an accomplished theological doctrine as the Catholic Church. The most erudite theologians in the world are the Catholic theologians...Indeed they develop everything good, cultural, social, charitable, and everything that Europe owns has its beginnings in the Catholic Church".¹⁶

The male and female Greek Catholic orders partake in the formation of the Church: The Basilians (both men and women), the Redemptorists and the

Servants of the Immaculate. They are built in a similar fashion to the Western orders, their formation and life in their communities are similar also. The members of the Greek Catholic orders see their mission in the period following 1989 as a period of renewal and of the reinstatement of the Church schools, hospitals and the like. Their efforts are concentrated on charitable and health-promoting activities. The pontifical letter *Oriente lumen* that points out some differences between the Western orders and the Eastern monastic communities is in many respects inspiring for the understanding of the devoted life of Eastern Christians. At the same time it shows them the ideal of primary Eastern forms of contemplation and meditation.

The Basilian sisters are divided based on their language and nationality differences. The Slovak oriented community settled down in Secovce, the Ruthenian-Ukraine community settled in Presov. It is worth noting that from among the Basilian monks in Krásny Brod a creative group of *jeromonachs*, (one person that is both a priest and a monk), was formed who decided to publish theological studies in their journal.¹⁷

Conclusion

The older generation of Greek Catholics is marked by the violent atheist proceedings, their bitter experience during Communism and at the same time by traditionalism. In the younger generation, on the other hand, the desire is for a true Church community which is woven also by an ecumenical relationship. It is true, however, that a Church arising in a non-institutional

¹⁶ 1946, p. 35 sqq.

¹⁷ Issues 1-2 were published in Presov in 1996.

way represents "a small flock". The perspective of the Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia is certainly optimistic now. Its central part is situated in Eastern Slovakia, which has always been known for its strong religious values. Because

of their past, this region has small wooden churches and in them icons that are unique in their folk and native artistic representation.¹⁸ The recent Communist past did not manage to destroy the faith of these people.

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18 The newest publication about them is by M. Sopoligu (1996).

Synod of Diamper and the Subsequent Events which led to the Coonan Cross Oath of 1653

The Synod of Diamper marked a turning point in the history of the Indo-oriental Church. The Mar Thoma Christians were obliged under severe punishment to have no relation with the Chaldean Patriarch. Gouvea's *Jornada do Arcebispo de Goa*, published in 1606 from Coimbra together with the Acts of the Synod (*Synodo Diocesano*), presented a distorted picture of the Church of the Mar Thoma Christians. It pictured her as had been heretical whom Archbishop Menezis made catholic by means of the synod. For the European readers this work of Gouvea was the main source of information about the Church of India. Consequently several historians simply repeated what Gouvea had written about the orthodoxy of the Thomas Christians. The Thomas Christians were pained at the accusation of heresy. They were also sad about terminating their age-old relation with the Chaldean Patriarch. They expressed their grievance in a testimony, about which the Chaldean Patriarch Mar Audo, basing on the memorials contemporary to the synod, reported to Pope Pius IX on 19 March 1876 in the following words:

The latin missionaries gathered the synod of Diamper with the aim, as they said, of purifying our Chal-

dean rite from the Nestorian errors which had been introduced there; and as we did not know the European languages, and as we did not have any defenders who spoke the same, they deceived us, got our signatures, and wrote things which we did not understand, as if we had pledged not to receive a bishop or a prelate, if not latin (ACO [= Archivio Congregazione Orientale], Acta [1876] 9, f. 259r).

This is supported by letters of Bishop Francis Ros in 1603, and of John Campori and Albert Laerzio in 1604 (ARSI, Goa 15, ff. 155-6, 176-9, 196-200, 209). The following is the substance of these letters:

1. Not a single canon was discussed or altered, so much so that there was no form of a synod.
2. The participants did not understand the meaning, and they put their signatures as they were persuaded by Fr Ros.
3. Some decrees were not read publicly and some canons were arbitrarily added by Menezes after the synod.

Thus we see that the Thomas Christians were in general unhappy about the synod of Diamper. They had the

feeling of being deceived, and they reacted. However Menezis wanted to enforce its decrees. He made a futile attempt to get papal approval of the decrees. In the archives of the Oriental Congregation, Rome, we have the following information regarding the matter:

The synod of Diamper was held under Clement VIII. The historian Raulin says that it was approved by that Pontiff. Until now no act related to that has been found out (ACO, Acta [1876] 9, f. 259r). Attempts made to find out an act of approbation of this synod either in the Secretariat of the Briefs or in the Pontifical Vatican Archives have not come out successful until now (ACO, Caldei [1848-69] 1, Ristretto [Feb. 1865], Cap. 1, Art. 2 2/24).

In spite of these facts, an impression was created that the decrees of the synod were approved by the Pope. Under the latin rule starting from 1599 the synod acquired greater momentum. Its decrees began to influence the ecclesial life-style of the Thomas Christians causing great loss to the oriental identity of their Church. The reaction of the Thomas Christians against the latinizing policy of the missionaries finally reached its climax in the event of the Coonan Cross Oath of 1653.

A Church subjected to Latinization

The Church of the Mar Thoma Christians was gradually subjected to a many-faceted latinization, in the liturgical life, spirituality, theological outlook, disciplinary system, other customs and traditions etc.

In 1599 Francis Ros, S.J. was appointed the first latin prelate to rule over the Mar Thoma Christians. Subsequently on August 4, 1600 the Church was put under the Portuguese *padroado* jurisdiction. Bishop Ros knew well the anti-Diamper feeling of the Christians. So he convoked another diocesan synod (ARSI, Goa 15, f. 155) in 1603 with the cooperation of the clergy and the people. That too did not produce the intended result. Then he made a diocesan Statute in 1606 (Bibliotheca Vaticana, Fondo Borgiano Indiano, 18. The Malayalam copy of the Statute) through which he succeeded to reintroduce the previous regulations in a more appealing manner, and thus stabilized the process of latinization.

In the absence of the traditional Syrian Metropolitan as the head of the Church, greater responsibility to safeguard the oriental identity of the Church against the process of latinization fell on the Archdeacon. He enjoyed traditional powers and autonomy in the ecclesiastical administration, which in the changed situation confronted with the latin approach of jurisdiction. During the initial years of latin rule there had been harmony between Bishop Ros and the Archdeacon. Gradually it was lost as Bishop Ros disregarded the traditional privileges and powers of the Archdeacon and the tension even reached a climax by 1609 when Bishop Ros excommunicated the Archdeacon. The conflict continued with varied intensities.

The Church suffered a great loss at this time. Its traditional head, the Metropolitan and Gate of All-India had jurisdiction over the whole of India and its confines. By a decree dated December 3, 1609 (BPP, II, 12-13), the Church was territorially limited. The decree was implemented by Menezis on Dec. 22, 1610 by dividing India into four padroado sees of Goa, Cochin, Kodungallore and Mylapore (BPP, II, 14-17). The Mar Thoma Christians were divided between the sees of Kodungallore and Cochin along with the Latins. This was an act which ignored the Syriac identity of the Church of the Thomas Christians. They could maintain their rite only in the limited area between the rivers Pampa and Bharathapuzha. It arrested the free growth of this Oriental Church. The Church is not yet fully liberated from this confinement.

In the conflict between Bishop Ros and the Archdeacon, Fr Stephen Brito, S. J. had criticized the policy of Bishop Ros and sided with the archdeacon. When Brito succeeded Bishop Ros, the Thomas Christians were very happy and they gave him a warm reception. It showed that they were not just anti-latin (APF, SOCG 189, ff. 334-339, a report dated February 20, 1625). The friendship of Brito with the Archdeacon was even criticized by the other Jesuits. But this friendship did not last long. Brito did not like the presence of other religious, the Dominicans, who had begun mission work among the

Thomas Christians at the invitation of the Archdeacon (APF, SOCG 105, ff. 168-9). Brito continuously opposed the desire of the Thomas Christians to have other religious. The decision of the Propaganda Congregation to allow other religious to work in the Indian mission was not executed in the case of Malabar due to the opposition of the Archbishop. Even the Bull of Pope Urban VIII in 1633, permitting all the religious to enter Malabar under pain of excommunication to any one who prevented any religious was a failure (ARSI, Goa 50, f. 102).

There were also other reasons of conflict. The Archbishop could not be at peace with the traditional administrative system of the church assemblies. Another complaint against Brito was that he did not know Syriac. Therefore the Archdeacon expressed his desire to appoint a coadjutor who knew Syriac. His preference was for the Dominicans, who, he thought, would respect their Syriac traditions. Another reason of tension was the opposition of the Archbishop against the religious congregation of St Thomas called Recollects. It was meant for those who desired contemplative life in solitude in the model of the East Syrian monasticism. There were also complaints against the seminary training, and it was decided not to send students to the seminary.

The claim of monopoly of jurisdiction by the Jesuits over the Christians and the resulting rivalry between themselves

BPP = Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae.

APF = Archivum Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide.

- Thomas Xtians were basically anti foreign rule at the time of the Dutch? later
- Oral tradition Orthodox position: methodological position Source (MSS)

and the Dominicans often destroyed peace of the Church. The relation between Brito and the Thomas Christians may be so summarised: whenever the customs and traditions of the Christians were ignored, and the rights and privileges of their Archdeacon were overlooked, the Christians protested. Archbishop Brito himself knew this well and he asserted once:

From my long experience I can say that much evil has been caused to this Church whenever the prelate turned against him [Archdeacon] (ARSI, Goa 18, ff. 139-140. Letter of Brito to the General on Jan. 1, 1633).

The successor of John Brito was Archbishop Francis Garcia. He was from the very beginning determined to put an end to the system of Church-government of the Thomas Christians and to establish that of the latin instead. But the Archdeacon being the indigenous leader of the Christian community and the champion of safeguarding its Indo-oriental identity, was duty-bound to defend this age-old system of church-government. Consequently, the whole period of Garcia's rule was a continuous struggle between himself and the Archdeacon, and it ended up in the event of 1653.

In creating such a situation leading to the Coonan Cross Oath, the part played by Francis Garcia is not insignificant. His own predecessor Stephen Brito had already expressed his fear and anxiety of a probable future catastrophe. He wrote to the Jesuit General on Dec. 29, 1639:

We are very anxious about what might happen in the future when I shall no longer be there by the side of my successor, seeing that he has a harsh temperament (ARSI, Goa 68 - I, f. 361v).

Garcia began doing things all alone. There started a flow of mutual accusations between the two. Garcia tried to terminate the Congregation of St Thomas, the Recollects, by dissuading the new applicants from joining it, by advising the inmates to leave the institution and by rejecting the candidates presented by the superior for tonsure (ARSI, Goa 68, ff. 15-16). With regard to other religious too he followed the policy of his predecessor. The attempt of the bishop of Cochin to implement the instruction of the Propaganda Congregation and the Brief of the Pope which demanded to allow other religious work in Malabar failed due to the opposition of the king of Portugal and of Garcia. Garcia continued to oppose the promulgation of the papal Brief on the pretexts of the rights and privileges of the Portuguese Padroado (APF, SOCG 109, ff. 117-127).

The aspirations and grievances of the Archdeacon and the Christians were well expressed in a petition they submitted to the viceroy when he visited Cochin. They complained against the harsh rule of the Jesuits and the inadequate clerical formation. They requested for a prelate who knew Syriac, suggesting to appoint a Syrian or a Dominican friar of higher qualities (ARSI, Goa 68, ff. 12-16, 18-21. The Portuguese version of the petition. Cf. J. Kollaparambil, St. Thomas Christian Revolution, 73-83).

Here we see that the main concern of the Thomas Christians was proper clerical formation and the preservation of their Syriac Rite; the prelate could be a Syrian or a Dominican friar who would be evidently a Latin. During this meeting the Archdeacon produced before the viceroy a document signed by Brito which recognized the traditional rights and powers of the archdeacon, which was another serious concern of the Christians.

Still the situation did not change, and even became worse. Garcia began to call the Thomas Christians schismatics. The baselessness of such an accusation was asserted by the bishop of Cochin in his report to the king, which says:

Only because the Christians of Malabar was asking for missionaries of other religious orders ..., the Jesuits were calling them schismatics and disobedient, while in truth they were not. He pointed out that by giving an inadequate education the Jesuits were keeping the native priests ignorant and their Church as a province of the blind (AHEI, LM 25, ff. 118-9. Cf. Kollaparambil, Revolution, 87-8).

The bishop of Cochin made a final attempt by publishing the papal Brief allowing all the religious orders to work in the missions of India and Japan. Then the Jesuits propagated that the Brief was unauthentic.

In 1647, disregarding the traditional position of the Archdeacon, who is also the ex-officio vicar general, Garcia appointed a Portuguese priest his vicar

general. During 1648-9 the archdeacon wrote letters to Rome and to the oriental patriarchs (Vincenzo Maria, *Il Viaggio all'Indie Orientali*, Roma 1672, 153) informing the situation. The Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria responded by sending Mar Atallah, a Catholic Metropolitan of the Syrian Rite. At Mylapore the Metropolitan was taken under custody by the Jesuits there.

The Thomas Christians believed that Mar Atallah had been sent by the Pope to govern them. They requested Garcia's help to release Mar Atallah promising him that they would continue to recognize him as their true prelate even if Atallah were sent by the Pope. Garcia replied: Even if the Patriarch were sent by the Supreme Pontiff, we cannot grant him to you, for he has not brought the beneplacit of our king (APF, SOCG 234, f. 338). Seeing that Garcia was adamant and considering the Jesuits who imprisoned the Patriarch sent by the Pope as schismatics, the Archdeacon and the leaders wrote to the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of Cochin and the superiors of all the religious orders informing them of the situation. To the prior of the Dominicans the archdeacon wrote:

You fathers know that on orders from Our Lord Jesus Christ St Thomas came to these parts, and with zealous works gave origin to this Church. The St Thomas Christians do not like the way the Society govern this Church now... They do what they want; we too shall do what we want (ARSI, Goa 50, ff. 83-84).

Mar Atallah was not allowed to enter Malabar not because the Jesuits thought that he was a heretic. He was detained in the Jesuit College at Mylapore. The rector of this college wrote to Garcia on Sept. 1, 1652 that he could not find anything in Mar Atallah against the Catholic faith. Still he wanted the Archbishop to see that Mar Atallah might not meet the Mar Thoma Christians (ARSI, Goa 21, f. 23).

Archbishop Garcia decided to send Mar Atallah to Goa to be presented to the inquisitors. As the ship with Mar Atallah on board was approaching Cochin, the Archdeacon with the community assembled at Mattanchery and again made efforts to meet the Patriarch to examine the credentials and to verify the identity, promising the authorities their support to punish him if found guilty (APF, SOCG 232, ff. 124v, 133, 137v, 356). Garcia did not yield in spite of the attempts (APF, SOCG 232, ff. 137-38, 355v) of some Jesuits, the captain of Cochin, the Commissary of the inquisition and the General of the Fleet to satisfy the request of the Christians. As a last attempt the leaders of the Christians requested the Archbishop to meet the people and to console them. This too failed and the ship set sail for Goa.

Meanwhile a rumour was spread that Mar Atallah was drowned. The disappointed Christians assembled in the church of Our Lady of Life at Mattanchery and resolved with a Solemn oath (APF, SOCG 232, ff. 117, 121, 129v, 133, 138, 142 352-353) not to obey Archbishop Garcia or any other prelate from the Society of Jesus and not to admit any Jesuits to

their churches. It happened on Jan. 3, 1653, and began to be known as Coonan Cross Oath. The following is a version of the oath:

Therefore, being so seriously offended, we gathered together in the church of the same place, where, having touched the Holy Gospels before the main altar and the image of the crucifix, we took the oath, never again to admit as our pastor the lord Francis Garcia, or anybody else from the Society (of Jesus), nor to admit these priests from the said Society into Malabar (Serra) or within our churches, till they made amendments for the injuries and offences with which we have been inflicted by them, both in the violent dismissal of the Patriarch, and in many other things before his arrival (transl. from a Latin manuscript, APF, SOCG 234, f. 324).

The above narration of the oath gives us some hints on the reasons that led the Christians to take such an oath. They 'were the injuries and offences with which the Thomas Christians were inflicted' by the Jesuits. What were the injuries and offences? A letter written by 13 priests and 31 laymen to the captain and governor of Cochin sheds some light on the matter. The relevant part of the letter is given below:

...We, therefore, called meetings and resolved, he who pays no attention to the order of the Supreme Pontiff and of the Holy Mother Church of Rome is not our prelate, nor shall we obey the said prelate. And

with the Fathers of St Paul, enemies of us and of the Holy Mother Church of Rome, we shall have no friendship, nor shall we pay any attention to the Archbishop of their order, until we shall see the Patriarch with our own eyes ... And we have made an Archbishop by the order and command of the Patriarch, who came by the mandate of the blessed Supreme Pontiff and of the Holy Mother Church of Rome ... And in case the Patriarch cannot be produced, he having been killed by the Fathers of St Paul, let another person of any of the four religious orders come by order of the Supreme Pontiff, one who knows Syriac and can teach us and help us with our offices, but except the Fathers of St Paul whom we do not at all want, because they are enemies of us and of the Holy Mother Church of Rome... For the sake of the Supreme Pontiff and of Holy Mother Church of Rome work hard to get the Patriarch back and to make us live in peace and tranquillity, because we always lived obedient as children of the Holy Mother Church of Rome, and so we desire very much to live as before (AHEI, LM 25, ff: 12-1. Cf. Kollaparambil, Revolution, 159-63).

Thus the oath was made on the ground that Garcia and the Jesuits disobeyed the orders of the Pope by taking away the prelate whom the Pope, as they believed, had sent to govern them (ARSI, Goa 68, f. 102). It was therefore far from being a gesture of disobedience to

the Supreme Pontiff, as has often been accused of by the missionaries, but rather an affirmation of fidelity to the Holy See.

That the Thomas Christians never intended to disobey the Pope was testified by Garcia himself. Writing to Hyacinth of Vincent, OCD, the Apostolic Commissary, he stated:

I know also that they never denied obedience to the Supreme Pontiff, at least in the external forum...it is sufficiently clear that they profess that the Armenian (Mar Atallah) was sent by the Supreme Pontiff of Rome, and that everything the arch-deacon did he did in the name of the said Armenian, sent as they say, by the Supreme Pontiff of Rome. Hence at least in the external forum it is needless to work for reducing them to the obedience of the Supreme Pontiff, for so far they have not denied it (ARSI, Goa 68, f. 326).

The letter also confirms that the fundamental concern of the Thomas Christians was always their Syriac Rite, and they wanted that their prelate should be one who knows this rite and who is able to teach them their rite. They were less concerned about who ruled them, whether a Latin or a Syrian, a foreigner or a native. Even after this critical event they were ready to receive any latin religious other than the Jesuits as their prelate, provided he would respect their Syriac patrimony. It was this basic and just desire of the Christians that was continuously

disrespected under the padroado rule. The Synod of Udayamperur paved the way for a systematic latinization of the Church of the Thomas Christians, which the padroado prelates effectively implemented. The Thomas Christians, reacted and their antipathy reached a climax in the event of the Coonan Cross Oath.

Ecumenical Implications

The formation of a non-Catholic community among the Mar Thoma Christians was the result of a gradual process, at the core of which were a deep affection for the apostolic heritage and an unfailing desire to preserve the oriental identity and the centuries old customs and privileges of their Church. The revolt of January 1653 was a strong public reaction of the Mar Thoma Christians against the latinizing policy of the Portuguese Padroado rule.

During the subsequent years, especially during the rule of Mar Chandy Parampil, most of the Christians came under the legitimate authority. A minority adhered to archdeacon Thomas Parampil who had led the revolt and who became invalidly and illegitimately ordained bishop. The pseudo-bishop began to be called Mar Thoma I. Although the schism formally came into being when he and his chief companion Ittithomman Cathanar were publicly excommunicated, his followers, about 30000 in number, were like the rest of the Christians in everything except that their bishop was not legitimately consecrated and that they did not obey their legitimate prelate (Sathyavedacharithram, Cunemau [1872],

202). Attempts were made during the time of Mar Thoma II for reunion (APF. SOCG 490, ff. 78-76). But the project failed due to the negative attitude of the carmelite Joseph Sebastiani (APF, CP 30, ff. 341-344).

Further attempts were made by the successors of Mar Thoma II for reunion. One demand of Mar Thoma IV was that the Pope should confirm him as the bishop of Malabar (APF, CP 109, f. 68). The followers of Mar Thoma IV expressed their desire to be governed by the carmelite Vicar Apostolic together with Mar Thoma IV, and that it should be in conformity with their ancient customs and traditions. Having failed to secure a reply from Rome, Mar Thoma IV entered into contact with the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch. Gradually the separated brethren, under their leaders came into closer relation with the Jacobites prelates of Antioch and finally effected the formation of the Jacobite Church of India.

The synod of Diamper had two basic goals: latin rule over the Thomas Christians and latinization of their customs and traditions. The reunion attempts did not succeed mainly because the latin missionaries would not change their policy of latinization and their desire for power and authority. The missionaries could not appreciate and accept the ecclesial traditions of the Thomas Christians which were different from theirs. Perhaps such an attitude is the real stumbling block on the way to ecumenism even today.

Orthodox Churches and Western Liturgies

In the general opinion of western Christianity, >>Orthodox<< liturgy is understood exclusively as the liturgy used by the Eastern Orthodox Churches (of Byzantine tradition). Even scholars, Catholic and non-Catholic, are using the term >>Orthodox liturgy<< to describe the Byzantine liturgy. Sometimes they even reproach the Catholic Church with illegal usurping liturgies of the Eastern and Orthodox Churches for proselytizing activities. They are sure of gaining the applause of Orthodox circles and also of ignorant-Catholic ecumenists. In fact, it is also for many Orthodox a surprise to learn that the Orthodox Churches are not at all fixed on their own traditional liturgy. Ecclesial communion is not bound to one liturgical tradition. Circumstances can arise, that Orthodox Churches admit also other forms of worship for faithful coming from western denominations, provided identity of faith is assured

First attempts in this direction can be proved as early as around three centuries ago, when parts of the non-jurors who had separated from the official Church of England began negotiations with Orthodox patriarchates. The Orthodox were ready to grant these groups autonomy in using their liturgical customs, however, at that time, the negotiations failed.

Officially approved western liturgies in Orthodox Churches

1 The Early Period

The need of approving liturgies having their origin in the Latin or western tradition became actual in the 19th century, especially in **North America**, where immigrants, dissatisfied with the pastoral care received by their Churches of origin, sought refuge with Orthodox Churches without having in mind to abandon their own religious ways of life. On their request, the Holy Synod of the *Russian Orthodox Church* approved an adaptation of the Roman Missal of 1570 on their behalf. There were but slight changes: (1) in the Nicene Creed, the western addition >>*Filioque*<< was omitted, (2) the epiclesis got a stronger emphasis, (3) in the commemorations (diptychs), instead of the Roman Catholic the Orthodox hierarchs have to be commemorated. This liturgy became known as the orthodox *Gregorian Liturgy*.

On request of the Russian Metropolitan in North America, who eventually became Patriarch Tikhon (after World War I; he was recently canonized), the Russian Church approved another western liturgy in 1904 which was named the *St Tikhon rite*. This liturgy was meant particularly for converts coming from the Anglican tradition, especially from

the Protestant Episcopal Church. It is an adapted form of the liturgy of the 1892 edition of the »»Book of common Prayer«« of the Episcopal Church. The changes are the same as in the »»Gregorian liturgy«« quoted above; in addition, the commemoration of Saints was introduced

After World War I, large groups of Russian Orthodox emigrants lived in western Europe. The Patriarchate of Moscow was much in favour of the rise of an Orthodox Church of western rite in France. In 1936, by a decision of the Holy Synod, *The Liturgy of St Germanus* [Saint-Germain] of Paris was allowed. This liturgy is not an adaptation of Latin liturgies existing before Vatican II, but uses elements of Latin liturgies prior to the Great Schism of 1054. The so-called Gallican liturgy which flourished in the 6th and 7th centuries was supposed to give anew a spiritual stimulus to find back to the common faith of the undivided Church.

2 Later Developments

After having negotiated with several other Orthodox Churches, the (Melkite) *Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch* under Patriarch Alexander III Tahhan established a *Western rite Vicariat* within the Antiochene (Byzantine) Archdiocese of North America in 1958. The Archbishop was then KYR ANTHONY BASHIR. The new Vicariat has consisted mostly of clergymen who converted with their parishes or groups of parishioners, or smaller religious communities originated in the Episcopal Church or Lutheran Churches, or even converts from free-church groups. In the course

of time, about 60 parishes were established in the Vicariat who are following either the Gregorian or the Tikhon liturgy. The number of converts and parishes (missions) is increasing. There are now also a few parishes following the English translation of the liturgy of St Germanus of Paris.

It has to be mentioned that there are also some western rite communities in the *Russian Orthodox Church Abroad* and in the *Romanian Orthodox Missionary Archdiocese* in the United States of America. Until recently, the *Église Orthodoxe-Catholique de France* (Orthodox Catholic Church of France) with its bishop, Msgr. Germain Bertrand-Hardy of Saint-Denis, a western rite community, was part of the Holy Synod of the *Orthodox Church of Romania*.

It was heard not long ago that representatives of the Orthodox parishes of western tradition in the United States have proposed to establish a »»Study House for the Western-Orthodox Rite«« either at the well known Holy Cross Seminary of Brookline, Massachusetts, the theological faculty of the Greek Orthodox Church, or at St Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, New York, the theological faculty of the (originally Russian) Orthodox Church in America, in order to assure an academic level in the formation of the future clergy. This house should be named after Fr Paul Schneirla, one of the founders of the Antiochene Vicariat.

3 A New Service Book

In the first years, after 1958, it was rather difficult to get the brochures containing the liturgical texts used in

the western rite communities. Since 1996 the *St Andrew Service Book* has been made available. It is the first complete edition approved by the competent ecclesiastical authority. It contains the Divine Liturgy of St Tikhon, the Divine Liturgy of St Gregory, the book of Psalms, the orders for Matins and Vespers, the celebration of special days in the course of the year, the services for baptism, matrimony, unctions, funerals, different devotions and prayers.

The book is very interesting both for western as eastern users, as it gives expression to the two different spiritualities. In an *eastern* prayer book, a service for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance would be unthinkable, but it is possible for *western* Orthodox communities. The argument given in the book is: the veneration of the blessed sacrament in the West and the veneration of the holy icons in the East are basing on the same incarnatory theology. The Liturgy of St Tikhon continues to have also now its Anglican flair, however, the (quite non-Anglican) prescription that *exclusively Orthodox Christians can be admitted to Holy Communion* is particularly stressed.

As to other *western devotions*, the book contains the Angelus prayer and the meditations for the Way of the Cross next to the *eastern* Trisagion and the troparion addressed to the Holy Trinity. Students of liturgy should give

their attention to the >>St Andrew Service Books<< They can learn that being in an ecclesial communion does not require an abandonment of their own authenticity and identity. One cannot accuse one Church because of accepting other liturgical traditions in her communion.

Concluding Remark

We have shown above that western liturgies have found their way into Orthodox Churches. One of the pioneers of that movement in Europe was certainly Archbishop Alexis Van der Meensbrugge of the Patriarchate of Moscow, a former Belgian Catholic Benedictine priest-monk who converted to the Orthodox Church. Within the Catholic communion, the Divine liturgy is celebrated according to Byzantine *typicon* as well as according to the *typica* of the Alexandrian, Syro-Antiochene, Syro-oriental and Armenian traditions. It can be asserted that all the authentic liturgies of the apostolic Churches of the West and of the East, despite the church separations, have remained in their genuine *orthodoxy*.

The Anglican Communion has opened herself to the Independent Syrian Church of Malabar (whose faith is identical with that of the Syrian Orthodox Church) and the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church (of the <<reformed>>). Syrians, called by some authors a >>Protestant Church of Syrian rite<<). The openness

towards one another, the ecclesial communion with other Churches, cannot mean adaptation as far as possible to or absorption by the other community.

In Germany, the only parish belonging to the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church consisted of the parish priest and members belonging all formerly to the Old Catholic Mariavite Church. After joining the Orthodox Church, they continued the celebration of the liturgy according to the Mariavite rite with the commemoration of the Orthodox Metropolitan of the Polish Orthodox Church, the Creed without the addition >>filioque<< and giving more emphasis to the epiclesis. But in 1991, the new parish priest replaced by the western liturgy by the Divine Liturgy according to St John Chrysostom.

So this parish has been fully integrated into the eastern liturgical tradition.

Within the communion of the Catholic Church which consists of 22 autonomous Churches (*sui iuris*), parts of the Syro-Malabar Church which still cling to western practices in their liturgy and devotional life are called to become conscious of their own oriental ecclesial identity. Otherwise, because of their hybrid way of life, their place cannot be among the 21 Churches *sui iuris* of *oriental* tradition. In that case they would be more sincere and better >>at home<< as *ritual vicariats* within the existing *Roman Catholic (Latin) dioceses* in Kerala and other parts of India. It is time to make a choice!

John Madey

Book Reviews

PATHIKULANGARA Varghese, *Qurbana* "The Eucharistic Celebration of the Chaldeo-Indian Church", Denha Services 48, Kottayam 1998, 1/8 demy; pages 352; price Rs 90.00 (₹ 9.00)

Qurbana is yet another excellent work by Rev. Dr Varghese Pathikulangara, the renowned liturgy scholar, on the eucharistic celebration of the Syro-Malabar Church. It is the second volume in a series of five, envisaged for a comprehensive discussion of the Chaldeo-Indian liturgical heritage, the first volume being *Chaldeo-Indian Liturgy 1: Introduction* (Denha Services 33, Kottayam 1992).

What is the Eucharist? How it is to be celebrated? What is its authenticity? Why such a text is to be used? There are several such questions heard today in the Syro-Malabar Church. Attempts are made by many to understand the Eucharist in better ways. The present book offers a reliable and enlightening account of the theological and pastoral aspects of the eucharistic celebration of the Syro-Malabar Church.

The whole work is divided into two parts. The first part tries to explain the origin of the eucharistic liturgy in Christian heritage, making a comparison of the main types of eucharistic prayers. Its five chapters discuss the following materials respectively: the Celebrational Co-efficient of Liturgy, Foundations of the Eucharistic Celebration, Liturgy and Symbolism, the Nucleus of the Eucharistic Celebration, and Liturgy and Salvation History.

The second part deals exclusively with the Eucharistic Celebration of the Chaldeo-Indian Heritage. The nine chapters in this part discuss the Chaldeo-Indian Heritage, Historical background of *Qurbana*, the Structure of a Chaldeo-Indian Church, the Introductory Rites, the Liturgy of the Word, the Rite of Preparation, *Quddasa*, the Rite of Reconciliation, the Rites of Communion and Conclusion, respectively. Besides, there are two appendices. The first one contains the general instructions regarding the order for the *Qurbana* of the Syro-Malabar Church and the English version of the Eucharistic text. Appendix two is a suggestion to make the third *G'hanta* prayer of the first *Quddasa* christological.

The Holy Eucharist is the celebration of our Christian existence. It is a participation in the Christ-event, a response that the believing community makes to God, the Father, who revealed Himself to man in Jesus Christ. It is the centre of Christian life. Hence the need of a thorough understanding of it. I am sure, this book will do a great help to those who sincerely wish to have a better and deeper understanding of the *Qurbana*. This book will serve as a basic guide for priests and seminarians. Lack of a deeper understanding of the *Qurbana* makes the faithful mere, superficial observers. The reading and study of this book will certainly enable us to take part in the *Qurbana* actively and meaningfully.

Thomson Thekkniyath CMI

Dr Cyrus Velampampil, The Celebration of Liturgy of the Word in the Syro-Malabar Qurbana: A Biblico - Theological Analysis, OIRSI, Kottayam 1997, pp, xxv+350 price 140.

The proclamation of the Word of God is historically linked to liturgical celebration. From the earliest days of Christian worship down to modern times, the celebration of the divine liturgy has involved not only the liturgy of the Eucharist but also the liturgy of the Word which was administered mainly through a series of readings from sacred scripture. Vatican II through its sacred Constitution on Liturgy (SC 24) has given a dogmatic basis for this principle and for the use of the sacred scripture in the liturgy. This book of Dr Cyrus Velampampil brings into sharp focus the prominent place the Word occupies in the celebration of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana. A careful reading of the book further reveals that the work is a biblical and theological answer to the question what is the meaning and theology of the present-day Syro-Malabar Liturgy of the Word. After having made the historical investigation of biblical, Jewish, apostolic and sub-apostolic antecedents of the liturgy of the Word, the author analyses the structure, prayers and rubrics of the liturgy of the Word in the Syro-Malabar Qurbana, followed by highlighting its different theological motifs.

The book is the doctoral dissertation defended at the Paurastya Vidyapitham Kottayam on 24 August 1995. The book has four parts altogether. The first two parts attempt a historical sketch of the general structure of the liturgy of the Word that is applicable to all liturgical families. The first part, divided into two chapters, brings out the historical antecedents of the present-day liturgy of the Word. An analysis of certain Old Testament passages of the great Qahal (Ex 19-24; Deut 31:10-13; 2 Kgs 23:1-23 and Neh 8:1-12) especially the Sinai pericope not only defines the profound reality or the celebration of the Word but also determines its external structure, form and frame. Thus the author succeeds in showing that the structural and theological developments of the present-day Liturgy of the Word of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana is rooted in biblical traditions. In the second chapter an investigation has been made to disclose the pattern of the Jewish synagogue service which is known to have influenced strongly the Christian practice of the liturgy of the Word.

The second part focuses on the ministry of the Word during the apostolic and post-apostolic periods. The earliest documents of Christian traditions and the writings of the early Fathers are seriously taken into consideration. In the first chapter the research takes a crucial step forward by analyzing the Emmaus incident as a pattern of the celebration of the liturgy of the Word during the time of Jesus and his Apostles. The second chapter examines the first century liturgical celebration of the Word. The third chapter is a research into the structure and theology of the liturgy of the Word as it was practiced in the first five centuries of Christianity.

After having made these preparatory studies, in the third part comprising two chapters, Fr Cyrus develops the structure of the present-day liturgy of the Word in the Syro-Malabar Qurbana. The first chapter opens with a discussion of the technical terms relating to the topic under discussion. The second chapter of this part offers a structure for the Syro-Malabar Liturgy of the Word analyzing its texts of prayers and rubrics. The fourth and last part comprising three chapters attempts to highlight certain theological motifs by means of a detailed analysis of the descending, ascending and ecclesial dimensions of the Syro-Malabar Liturgy of the Word. Thus we can firmly assert that the author succeeds in bringing out the vital importance of the word in the Syro-Malabar Qurbana and thus the proper objective of the study is attained.

The methodology followed in preparation of the book is excellently scientific. The historical investigation has helped the author to situate the theological analysis in a correct historical perspective. 22 pages of printed bibliography shows that the author has gone through the whole relevant sources and literature in this area and that the conclusions drawn are in accordance with the current scholarship in this area. The division and organization of the book help easy reference. The presentation is systematic.

The book is a great contribution to catholic theology, a valuable contribution especially to liturgical theology. Theology being an attempt to understand our faith or critical reflection of our faith, it is necessarily related to liturgical theology, since it is the noblest expression of our faith. The catholic theology was and still is defective in this respect since it was exclusively based on Bible, teaching of the church and systematic reflection. Hence the work has contributed to a proper way of theologizing in the Church. So far nobody has undertaken such a work and we have here an original contribution in the field of liturgical theology especially of the East and in particular of the Syro-Malabar Ecclesial Tradition.

Dr Matthew Vellanickal.

News

1 Holy Father Completes 20 Years of Papal Ministry

His Holiness Pope John Paul II has completed 20 years after his election to Papacy on 18th October 1978. His Pontificate is the longest in the second half of this century. It is remarkable for several things especially for the numerous papal visits to several countries, for the number of encyclicals he has written and especially for the dynamism with which the Pope has been carrying out his ministry. The Pope celebrated the Holy Eucharist in St Peter's square to commemorate his election. Thousands of the faithful participated in the H. Mass. May God enable him to guide the Church into the 21st century.

2 Fides et Ratio

Pope John Paul II has issued a new encyclical, *Fides et Ratio*, on 14th Sept. 1998. This is his 13th encyclical. He discusses how reason and faith should be integrated in Christian life and explains that one does not contradict the other. He warns against the dangers posed by certain philosophies which give supreme value to reason and thereby deny the importance of faith. Revelation forms part of faith. Reason should be able to explain faith and thus it is at the service of faith.

3 The second Dialogue between Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East

The second ecumenical Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East (Nestorian Church) was held in the first week of November in London. His Holiness Pope John Paul II and His Holiness Patriarch Mar Denha IV took the necessary initiative.

The members who represented the Catholic Church were: Msgr Matthew Vellanickal (Syro-Malabar Church, India), Abp Mar Audo and Mons. Sarhad Jammo (Chaldean Church); Abp Cyril Mar Boustros (Greek-Melkite Church); Abp Pierre Duprey and Fr Johan Boney (Pont. Council for Christian Unity, Vatican). The following members represented the Assyrian Church. Mar Babai Soro, Abp Mar Aprem, Archdeacon Younar, Rev. Varghese and Rev. Duma.

The discussions were centered on sacraments - their number, nature, celebration etc. The first dialogue was on Christology. The next meeting will be on Petrine Primacy and the allied subjects.

4 Honorary Degrees conferred on eminent Syriac Scholars

St Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute (SEERI) at Kottayam, India has honoured Prof. Dr John Madey, Paderborn, Germany; Prof. Dr I.H. Dalmais O.P. Institute Catholique, France, Corepiscopa Dr J.P. M. Van der Ploeg O.P. Nijmegen, Holland; and Corepiscopa Dr Kurian Kaniamparampil, Kerala, India by conferring on them *Honorary Degrees*. The ceremony took place at a public meeting held on September 19, 1998 in SEERI. The Degrees were conferred considering their contributions to Syriac and Eastern Studies.

5 Poulouse Mar Philaxinos expired

His Grace Poulouse Mar Philaxinos of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church of India died on November 3, 1998. He was born on April 28, 1928 at Thozhiyoor in the district of Thrissur, Kerala, India and was ordained priest in 1961 in the Thozhiyoor Church. In 1967 he became the 13th Metropolitan of his Church. After 10 years he was reunited together with some faithful with the Catholic Church and became the titular bishop of Chayal. He continued his ministry in the Syro-Malankara Archdiocese of Trivandrum as the Episcopal Vicar. He was residing near Kunnankulam and doing spiritual service in that area until his death. The funeral service was on 5th November 1998 in the St John's Cathedral of Tiruvalla where he was also buried.

6 Fr Felix Nellikunnath CST, the Superior General of CST died

Fr Felix Nellikunnath CST, the Superior General of the Congregation of St Therese (CST) died of heart complaints in Delhi on 13th November 1998. He was buried in the cemetery of Little Flower Seminary, at Aluva.

7 The First Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of the Syro-Malabar Church

The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of the Syro Malabar Church was convened at Mount St Thomas, Kakkanad, at the headquarters of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia. The Assembly started at 4.00 pm on Monday 9th of November and concluded with lunch on Thursday 12th. All the members of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, except Mar Sebastian Valloppilly, the bishop emeritus of Thalasserry, were present. There were 353 participants. 26 Archbishops and Bishops attended the meeting. The Vicar Generals of the respective dioceses, Superior Generals of the men and women Religious Congregations, Heads of Major Seminaries and Theological faculties, delegates from each diocese who consisted of priests, religious and the laity, and some nominated members attended the Assembly. Representatives were admitted also from the Syro-Malabar emigrants outside Kerala, USA and Europe.

After the inaugural meeting on the following day (10th) the whole Assembly was divided into 15 groups and each group was given specific topics for their discussion. On the third day (11th) there was a general session in which the reports of the

group discussions were presented. On the last day (12th) in the final session a concluding report was also presented highlighting the main points agreed upon in the groups. The first session on the 10th was set apart for presenting the reports on the studies made in each diocese on the basis of the orientation papers already distributed from the Major Archiepiscopal Office. All the 22 Syro-Malabar dioceses were allotted three minutes each for their report. The three emigrants from outside Kerala, representing India, Europe and America also submitted their reports.

The Assembly was inaugurated by the Apostolic Administrator Mar Varkey Vithayathil. The light was lit by Mar Antony Cardinal Padiyara. The topics of discussions were Liturgy, discipline, faith-formation, education, Dalit problems, medical ministry, ecumenism, social work, religious dialogue, mass media and charismatic renewal. It also did deal with the social evils such as corruption, exploitation, alcoholism etc. The first discussion was centered on liturgy and discipline. The liturgy became the key-topic mainly due to the grave liturgical indiscipline which prevailed in some of the dioceses of the Syro-Malabar Church during the last few years. A major section of the Syro-Malabar Church was faithfully following the Eastern Traditions in liturgical celebrations in harmony with the Roman Directives. They were being given adequate catechetical instruction and faith formation, while on the other hand some [other dioceses were following the recent Latin practices such as Mass facing the people, which was explicitly disapproved by the Holy See. It is a historical anachronism that the Syro-Malabar Church which is an ancient Church of Eastern Tradition has not yet succeeded under their indigenous bishops. It was quite noticeable in the Synod that those who represented the dioceses where the proper liturgical formation was imparted, were able to establish their point of view based on the teachings of Vatican II and the official documents of Holy See and the authentic Eastern Traditions. It was the unanimous desire of all the 15 groups to have only one official form of eucharistic celebration in the whole Syro-Malabar Church. Consequently the Synod also decided to agree upon a single text as early as possible.

The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly has been indeed a turning point in the modern history of the Syro-Malabar Church. The representatives of the various dioceses realized that there are many things to be studied and that superficial claims of changes in Liturgy cannot answer the solid arguments of those who are qualified in Liturgical matters. Moreover the recent Papal Letter to the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy entrusting the responsibility to take decisions in liturgical matters does not free them from the basic responsibility to study the sources. In his Letter the Pope has categorically warned that their role should be seen as a stewardship and that they are never the masters of the heritage of the Church. Moreover the people have every right to assess whether those who teach them are faithful to the authentic ecclesial heritage which is being handed down to them, to be transmitted faithfully to the following generations. Hence it is the basic duty of the hierarchy to study seriously the various sources of their ecclesial heritage.

Some of the speeches made in the hall of the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, at the beginning and at the end of the Assembly reflected a kind of inferiority complex resulting from their incompetence in the office they happened to occupy.

It seems that the newspapers were not given the official text approved by the Synod of Bishops for publication. It lead to give way to misleading reports by the different journals. The official resolutions are the following:

1. There should be uniformity concerning the celebration of the Holy Qurbana in the Syro-Malabar Church, and that is to be achieved without further delay. Until the common agreement on the uniform celebration is reached, the existing three forms of celebration may be continued in the respective dioceses. The Synod has decided to start a research centre at Mount St Thomas to conduct studies aimed at uniformity and also other liturgical studies. The initial steps are already taken.
2. All are exhorted to find solutions to differences of opinions and controversies in a christian spirit and through the proper ecclesiastical structures. If anything is lacking in the existing structures, steps should be taken to improve the situation at all the (administrative) levels of the Church. It is painful and highly regrettable to make public statements or publish literatures tarnishing the Church and ecclesiastical authorities and to indulge in actions that cause scandal to Christian community. Penal actions according to the canon law will be taken against those people who indulge in such activities.
3. There are faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church living outside the Syro-Malabar dioceses in India and also abroad. Proper initiatives will be taken to provide them the necessary pastoral care and also to be able to evangelise in any part of India.
4. This Synod decides to end all the recent controversies concerning the veneration of the cross and decrees that the Marthoma Sliva and all other crosses and crucifixes are worthy of veneration in the Syro-Malabar Church.
5. Taking into consideration the liturgical and pastoral needs, persons may be chosen from among the married or unmarried laity and deputed to serve in the church by ordaining them as 'Deacons'.

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